LORD OF THE MYSTERIES

by Cuttlefish That Loves Diving

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LORD OF
THE MYSTERIES

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- BOOK 4 -

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[Atlas Studios (Webnovel)]

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CHAPTER 301
AWAKENING

Meow!

The black cat's cry echoed in the open area that was surrounded by the secluded forest. Regardless of whether it was the adult black-robed man or the fifteen-or sixteen-year-old boys and girls, all of them simultaneously cast their gaze onto the corpse lying in the middle.

A gust of cold wind blew, and the black cat landed on the ground, staring at the human who had just thrown it. It kept flicking its tail around.

All of a sudden, its fur stood on end again. Then, exerting great force with its hind limbs, it jumped up and fled in another direction.

Unfortunately, whatever it did had failed to attract any attention. All the humans present had their attention focused on the motionless corpse.

Seconds turned to minutes, but the corpse didn't undergo any anticipated changes.

"Another failure?" One of the teenagers moved closer and crouched down, poking at the dead man's skin with his fingers.

"There's no reaction." He turned around halfway and spoke to the man in black and his companions.

At this moment, he felt a gust of wind hit his face from beneath him.

With a swoosh, the corpse sat up!

The youth was startled and immediately cheered in surprise, "It's a success! It's a success…”

Before he could finish his sentence, the corpse grabbed him by the shoulder and pulled him into its arms. Then, it opened its mouth and bit down, producing a sound and causing blood to splatter.

"Ah! Help!" the youth screamed in horror and retreated with all his might, but he couldn't break free.

The corpse raised its head, revealing rows of white teeth, as well as bits of flesh hanging between its teeth, and blood flowing from its mouth.

The black-robed man was stunned for a moment, then he took out a whistle that was brass in color. He put it in his mouth, and blew on it.

Then, he said in Hermes, "I command you in the name of Death!"

As his voice echoed in the air, the corpse stopped chewing and momentarily froze on the spot.

The youth, whose neck and shoulders had been mangled by the bite, similarly collapsed as if he had lost his soul. The dirt around his nether regions was completely moist.

"It really is possible…” the black-robed man muttered in pleasant surprise. He pointed at the corpse and once again said in Hermes, "Get up!"

The corpse abruptly stood up, then it threw back its shoulders before quickly running into the depths of the secluded forest.

"Come back!" the black-robed man cried out in surprise, but the corpse showed no signs of stopping.

He blew his whistle again and shouted with dignity, "I command you to return in the name of Death!"

With those words, the corpse disappeared into the woods.

"I ordered you to return…" the black-robed man stood rooted to the spot in stupefaction as he mumbled to himself in a daze.

In the woods, Klein held Azik's copper whistle and the matchbox in one hand. He kept lighting matchsticks and shook his wrist to extinguish them before throwing them to the ground.

During this process, he moved backwards in an arc.

Tap! Tap! Tap!

A corpse with a pale face and a foul stench rushed over. Its lifeless eyes stared straight at the ancient and exquisite copper whistle.

As Klein retreated, his cheeks puffed out, he aimed at the corpse and simulated the sound:

Bang!

The corpse suddenly staggered as a penetrating wound appeared in its chest.

Bang!

Klein puffed out his cheeks again and fired another Air Bullet.

Splat! The head of the corpse shattered as rotten liquid dripped from it incessantly.

However, that wasn't a fatal injury to the corpse. It only slowed down for a moment before it continued again.

Upon seeing this, Klein took a step back and snapped loudly.

Pa!

A bright flame rose from the ground, enveloping the corpse and igniting its outer garments.

Tap! Tap! Tap!

The corpse rushed through the flames and continued to charge forward like a mad bull.

Pa! Pa! Pa! Klein kept snapping his fingers, causing red flames to appear on the ground, one after another.

The corpse didn't feel any pain as it passed through the flames, but gradually, its body began to burn, and the flames grew more and more intense. It gave off the strange feeling as though a candle was melting.

Finally, the corpse, which had turned into a torch, arrived in front of Klein as it clawed at him.

At the same time, a flame rose up and engulfed both him and Klein.

The corpse grabbed Klein's shoulder but only produced sparks.

Klein's figure dissipated in the red light and reappeared in the farthest burning pile.

At that point, the corpse seemed to have exhausted all of its strength and stopped struggling. It quickly melted under the dark green flames, turning into ashes and oil wax.

He's stronger than all the zombies and wraiths that I've met before. Well, not as good as Mr. Azik's descendant… If it weren't for me, they would all be dead here today. Klein shook his head and walked through the trees toward the open area.

At this moment, the black-robed man had already noticed the changes in the forest. Without any hesitation, he turned around and ran, while the seven to

eight youngsters scattered in a flash. However, when they realized that they were the only ones in the area, they timidly stopped and returned to the original area where they gathered together.

Having just experienced the awakening of a corpse, and how the corpse had bitten one of the youths, they didn't dare to run away, alone, in the deep, dark night.

It would make the back of their necks feel cold.

They looked at each other. No one dared to help the youth who was badly mutilated in the neck and shoulders, afraid that he might turn into a zombie at any moment.

In the short silence that made their hearts beat like a drum, they saw a clown, wearing flashy clothes with red, yellow, and white paint covering his face, walking out from the forest.

This was an illusion that was personally created by Klein.

He surveyed his surroundings but didn't pursue the black-robed man. Instead, he asked in a hoarse voice, "Who was the one who presided over the ceremony?"

Who? It seemed as if the teenagers were still in a daze. It took them a few seconds before they pushed out a trembling boy who replied, "He… he's our language teacher in ancient Feysac, Kapusky Reid…

"He claimed to have a deep understanding of death and wanted to lead us in the search of the mysteries of immortality."

So he's a teacher from school… The mysteries of immortality? You really don't need to pay taxes to brag… Judging from his performance just now, this fellow shouldn't be a Spirit Medium. At the very most, he would be a Gravedigger. In fact, he might only be at Sequence 9, a Corpse Collector… Of course, he might not be from the Death pathway and simply joined the

Numinous Episcopate because of his adoration.… After Klein got the exact location where Kapusky stayed, he thought for a moment and said, "You guys can go back now. Don't get involved in this anymore. Don't leak this out.

"Otherwise, all of you will die."

Then, he emphasized again, "All of you will die."

The young boys and girls who had been scared witless by what had just happened all frantically nodded. They prepared to leave with each other's help.

At this moment, a young girl with smooth hair pointed at her companion who was moaning in pain on the ground and asked, "Will… will he be alright?"

"He won't die for now, but you have to take him to a doctor. Say that he was bitten by a hyena that often eats rotting meat." Klein ignored them and headed back into the woods.

The young man and woman looked at each other, and someone blurted out, "Ex-excuse me, may I ask, how we should address you?"

Klein smiled and deliberately misled him as he replied in a low voice, "I'm just a gatekeeper of hell."

As he spoke, a mist spread out, and his figure disappeared from where he stood.

Of course, those were all illusions.

"A gatekeeper of hell?" The young men and women repeated the words softly, each having their own thoughts.

However, after a gust of bone-piercing cold wind blew past, they trembled once more, supported their companions, and left the place without daring to look back.

…

This is a member of the Numinous Episcopate? What a disappointment… If he didn't abandon his current identity, I would pay him a visit in the middle of the night to see if he knows anything. Yeah, I have to teach him a lesson so that he wouldn't dare to bring trouble to the students again. Does he think Spirit Dances and resurrection rituals are child's play? Klein habitually judged the situation from a Nighthawk's standpoint.

Soon, he returned to Rogo Colloman's mansion and waited patiently for the bodyguards to pass by during their patrols.

As soon as he found an opportunity, he climbed over the fence and quickly followed the shadows to the house, then he quietly climbed up to the balcony.

At that moment, the figurine disguised as him was still smoking.

Pa! Klein snapped his fingers.

The figure in front of him turned into a thin piece of paper and floated onto his palm.

Compared to before, this piece of paper was covered with red, rusty marks and was no longer usable.

Klein didn't dare to throw it anywhere. He folded it and placed it in his pocket.

Having done all this, he sauntered back down the hall and into Adol's bedroom.

"What took you so long?" Stuart asked in a trembling voice.

He had gone to the door to inquire, and he had found Sherlock Moriarty smoking one cigarette after another. Due to his duty, he didn't dare leave the bedroom.

Klein laughed and replied, "Take a rest and relax. You can go too, I don't mind."

"I…" Just as Stuart was about to agree, he suddenly thought of something —he would end up being the only person on the balcony, surrounded by the dark night and without sufficient brightness. There would be a cold wind and an environment that always reminded one of a ghost story.

Therefore, he forced a smile and said, "It's fine, I don't need it."

Klein smiled silently and sat down again, letting the reclining chair rock gently and slowly in the night.

This continued till daybreak. Nothing else happened.

When Adol woke up, he sat up in bed, lost in thought.

Klein didn't say anything, but he swapped places with Kaslana and her assistant and slowly walked to the guest room to catch up on his sleep.

He was asleep when he heard Rogo Colloman exclaim in pleasant surprise, "Oh, my boy, you're fine now?

"Holy Lord of Storms, I'll donate 300 pounds to the Church!

"Y-you are telling me that they won't kill you? It was all a misunderstanding?"

300 pounds? How extravagant… Klein rolled over and wrapped his arms around the soft, warm quilt while mumbling.

Then, he went back to sleep.

At noon, when Klein went downstairs to have a meal, Kaslana sat across from him and asked with a slight frown, "What happened last night?"

"Nothing," Klein answered simply, and then he laughed. "Does Adol waking up and going to the washroom count?"

Next to him, Stuart slowed down his actions and nodded in agreement.

She glanced at their faces, then she retracted her gaze and replied in a low voice, "No."

The corner of Klein's mouth curled up as he skillfully cut his steak.

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CHAPTER 302
A CLUE

The detective, who had been on leave, returned to Grimm Garden Street shortly after Klein and the others had finished their lunch. This also meant that his assignment was over.

Due to the visible improvement in Adol's situation, Rogo Colloman was quite generous in the settlement of his pay, and he paid an additional fifty percent above the ten pounds which they had agreed upon.

As expected of a jewelry businessman to be this generous. However, compared to the other people in West Borough and Empress Borough, he isn't considered that rich. Grimm Garden Street is close to the suburbs, and it's not too far from the cemetery. I can reach it in ten minutes if I run at full speed… Eh, Miss Bodyguard, no—Miss Sharron, is highly likely of being a Sequence 5 Beyonder. She charges one thousand pounds for three days, while I, as a Sequence 7 Beyonder, am only worth fifteen pounds a day. There's still a big difference…

Of course, if I were to take on such missions every day, my income would be over 5,400 pounds a year, putting me at the top of the middle class. Even the top manager of the Backlund Bank makes 5,000 pounds a year… Heh heh, this is just pure fantasy. For most detectives, business comes sporadically… And the amount of Beyonder ingredients I need to advance to Sequence 6 is definitely more than 3,000 pounds. Just thinking about it makes my head hurt. For normal people, this is a huge sum of money, enough to sustain a good life!

The good news is that even if I grasp the "acting method," digesting the Sequence 7 potion will take me somewhere between six months to three

years. Even if I can quickly conclude the rules of a Magician, I'll only be able to push forward that lowest threshold by one to two months. I still have plenty of time to save up and search for clues to these ingredients…

Wait. Miss Justice still owes me, uh—my adorer 5,000 pounds…

However, her financial situation isn't in good shape recently. It will be difficult for her to come up with a large sum of cash in the next few months…

Klein took the three five-pound notes and left West Borough with thoughts running through his mind.

After returning to Minsk Street, he quickly burned the used paper figurine and made another two more.

In the evening, he took the steam metro to the Backlund Bridge district, and according to the numbers provided in the newspapers, he knocked on the door of the house where the gathering would take place.

Similar to the past few times, he put on an iron mask that covered only the upper half of his face, wore a hooded black robe, and followed the attendant into the activity room, where only one candle burned quietly.

At first glance, Klein noticed that the number of Beyonders present at this gathering was less than half of what it used to be.

I came at the exact time. Are the others late? This time, Klein didn't change his gait and picked a corner before sitting down slowly.

After a few minutes, the old Eye of Wisdom cleared his throat and said, "Let's begin the gathering. The others shouldn't be coming."

After saying that, he gave a brief explanation.

"As the serial killer has yet to be found, the Nighthawks, Mandated Punishers, and the Machinery Hivemind, as well as a large number of MI9 Beyonders, are out doing large-scale investigations and searches.

"Under such a situation, it's very normal and understandable for those friends to be unwilling to go out and participate in gatherings.

"Frankly, I'm surprised by the number of people that showed up today."

Sure enough, a circle of Beyonders isn't isolated; they would also be affected by current affairs… Klein looked around and saw that the fat Apothecary wasn't absent. His heart immediately relaxed.

The Apothecary nudged the metal mask on his face, calling out without much hope, "Seeking to purchase the Spring of Elves marrow crystals. Price is negotiable."

"I have it," Klein said without hesitation.

He was worried that someone else might've found this Beyonder ingredient, thereby causing the price of his stock of goods to fall.

Although Beyonder ingredients were rare, and it was rare for items to reappear in independent circles, one could never be too careful.

"Seeking to purchase the Spring of Elves marrow crystals…" The Apothecary didn't seem to hear the response.

He was halfway through the sentence when it suddenly struck him. He turned his head to look at Klein and blurted, "You do?"

"Yes." Klein found his fiery gaze a little too overwhelming.

As he did so, he rolled up his black robe and took out an iron cigarette case.

Pa! Klein opened the cigarette case, revealing the faded, egg-shaped Spring of Elves marrow crystal.

"If you're worried, you can let the Old Mister Eye of Wisdom appraise it," Klein added in a low voice.

This wasn't really necessary because it was obvious if something was a Beyonder ingredient or not. It was also quickly identified if something was contaminated or not.

However, if one was lacking in mysticism knowledge, a Beyonder ingredient could very easily be mixed up with similar-looking ingredients. When that happened, one needed an appraisal.

The Apothecary looked like he was looking at a beautiful lady he had been yearning for all this time. He looked at the Beyonder ingredient in Klein's hands, mesmerized. After a few seconds, he shook his head and said, "No, there's no need! That's it! That's it!"

Klein curved the corner of his lips into a smile and named his price.

"300 pounds and clues to the Apothecary formula."

"Clues to the Apothecary formula… It's you!" The Apothecary was stunned for a moment before he finally understood who the man was.

It was the guy who made him bring the sedative for nothing!

Soon after, his heart pained, his regret similarly reaching its limit as he sighed emotionally. "You really are a lucky guy!

"Why didn't I choose that road of fortune…”

I'm the King of Yellow and Black who wields good luck after all… Klein lampooned himself.

The Apothecary sighed and changed his posture.

"That's too expensive. 200 pounds and a clue to the formula."

"The clue to the formula is only a bonus because I cannot confirm its veracity. Therefore, 300 pounds, not a penny less, I believe it's needed elsewhere." Klein smiled. "This price is actually very fair. If it were anyone else, they might've offered 400 or even 500 pounds, and you might've even accepted that price."

"I'm not that foolish. I can still wait…" The apothecary grumbled before saying, "The clue can be verified by Old Man, uh—Old Mister Eye of Wisdom."

"It must be something that exists objectively, something that has detailed information before I'm able to appraise it. Just a clue isn't among these conditions," Eye of Wisdom said.

*Divination, on the other hand, can roughly determine whether the clue is effective as long as it doesn't involve powers two or three Sequences above myself… *Klein silently said to himself.

However, he wouldn't reveal his expertise in divination at a Beyonder gathering.

"Alright then… 300 pounds plus the clue. You lucked out!" The Apothecary took a deep breath and pulled out a thick wad of cash. He then counted the corresponding amount and then asked the attendant to bring him a pen and paper before he started writing.

After he was done writing the clue, he crumpled the paper into a ball and handed it along with the cash and some items to the attendant.

Klein was suddenly stunned when he saw the attendant walk over.

In addition to the cash and clue, there were also four glass tubes filled with what seemed to be pure liquids.

"What are these?" Klein asked, perplexed.

"Have you forgotten? Your sedative, the sedative I specially concocted. It's ten soli a bottle, two pounds for four, so the cash there is 298 pounds," answered the Apothecary. "If you're worried about my sedative, you can have it appraised."

I really forgot… I did all of that to gain Miss Sharron's trust, and now that she's not here, well… It's fine; maybe a sedative would be able to handle some unexpected situations… Klein stopped talking, took out the Spring of Elves marrow crystal, took the items, counted the cash in front of everyone, and determined their authenticity with the faint candlelight.

*A total of 298 pounds… That's right… *Seeing that his wallet could no longer hold any more cash, Klein could only roll up the bills and slip them into his pocket.

After putting away the sedative, he unfolded the note and glanced at the clue.

"On the south side of the Bridge, on Rose Street, at the Harvest Church, find Bishop Utravsky. As long as you help him complete a mission, you'll be able to get the Apothecary formula."

Harvest Church. That's one of the few cathedrals of the Church of Mother Earth in the kingdom. This Church also grasps two Beyonder pathways: "Planter" and "Apothecary"…The clues match well… Klein thought as he refolded the note.

As the gathering continued, it was unknown whether the female Beyonder with the Artisan backing her wasn't present, or she just didn't have any new Beyonder weapons to sell. There were no signs of her, leaving Klein

disappointed. Now that he had 509 pounds in hand, he wanted to equip himself nicely.

After many transactions were aborted, a man sitting on a stool said in a low voice, "A friend of mine was unfortunately discovered in this investigation. He's imprisoned in a particular Lord of Storms cathedral by the Mandated Punishers. I wish to hire a few helpers to rescue him."

Eye of Wisdom immediately replied, "Stray Dog, give up that thought! A cathedral's Mandated Punishers and Sealed Artifacts are enough to destroy all of us here.

"Your friend's fate has already been decided. Don't let yourself be trapped in the same situation."

Stray Dog looked around and realized that no one responded to his request. He couldn't help but thump his thigh, growling, "But, what did he do wrong?

"He's an excellent physician. He's saved a lot of patients and has never hurt anyone! Just because he consumed a potion and became a Beyonder, he's to be imprisoned in a place where the sun never shines. He'll even become an experimental subject for the Mandated Punishers?

"Why?

"Why…”

Stray Dog's agonized questions echoed in the room. Even the Apothecary, who couldn't keep his mouth shut, remained silent.

*Sigh… *Klein, a former official Beyonder, could only sigh deeply in his heart.

Without the spread of the "acting method," wild Beyonders are ticking time bombs…

But if the "acting method" is popularized, then the situation would become even more chaotic and bloody… After all, there are the Laws of Beyonder Characteristics Indestructibility and Conservation…

In this heavy atmosphere, the gathering came to an end. Klein, who had gotten nothing else, spoke again.

"Who has revolvers and bullets that come augmented with different Beyonder effects?

"For example, purification, demon-hunting, etc."

He didn't specifically fix the caliber of the bullets because he didn't have a gun yet. He could simply wait until he bought the bullets before matching the corresponding gun.

In the midst of the silence, a female Beyonder sitting in the same corner replied in a low voice, "I can help you ask, and I'll give you the answer at the next gathering."

It seemed to be the lady with the Artisan backing her… Klein sighed.

"Alright."

After the gathering ended, he didn't return to Minsk Street directly. Instead, he went to East Borough and changed his clothes, heading to the border between North Borough and Hillston Borough.

It was where the suspected member of the Numinous Episcopate, Kapusky Reid, lived.

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CHAPTER 303
ROOKIE

North Borough, Aulka Street.

Kapusky Reid was sitting in a reclining chair in his activity room, lost in thought. In front of him was a fireplace burning with charcoal.

As a senior educator at a public school, he received a salary of more than four pounds a week, which was enough for a bachelor like him to live quite well, but the clothes he wore at home were patched up, and the teacups on the table looked extremely simple.

Without taking off his wig, the most striking thing about Kapusky was his high cheekbones and puffed-up chest—a deformity in which the sternum protruded outwards.

On his knee was a book of poems in ancient Feysac, but he hadn't flipped a single page even after some time had passed.

Kapusky's eyes were unfocused as he stared blankly when he suddenly heard a light chuckle in his ear.

"I'm very curious as to why you didn't run and chose to remain at home. Aren't you afraid of the police coming for you?"

The voice was low and hoarse, like a boy whose voice was cracking during puberty.

Kapusky shuddered and almost jumped out of his reclining chair.

He abruptly turned his head to look and saw that there was a figure sitting on the sofa a few steps away from him!

The figure wore summer wear—a linen shirt and light trousers. Its face was hazy and indistinct.

"Wh-who are you? What are you doing here?" Kapusky asked immediately as he gripped the armrest.

Klein, who had used his hallucination powers, leaned back, crossed his hands, and leisurely said, "Just last night, heh, it should be earlier this morning, I saved all of you."

"Saved us?" Kapusky relaxed a little when he realized that the intruder didn't seem to mean any harm. "Y-you're that person in the forest? You took care of the corpse we awakened?"

As he spoke, he moved awkwardly, showing obvious fear.

He was able to infiltrate without me realizing it while I was awake. I definitely wouldn't be able to resist… Such thoughts quickly flashed through Kapusky's mind.

"You guys are quite lucky that I happened to pass by; otherwise, there would only be corpses left strewn on the ground in the forest—corpses that would've been bitten to shreds." Klein laughed. "Answer my previous question, I'm very curious why you stayed at home. Do you know what crimes you've committed?"

From the way that he had conducted the resurrection ritual and the reaction he had before and after the ritual, Klein had confirmed that Kapusky was a rookie who didn't have the means to hide his true emotions. Therefore, he intended to only use Spirit Vision and interrogation to get to the bottom of the matter. At most, he would verify it with divination at the end.

"I-I know, secretly buying corpses and robbing corpses from tombs. These are all crimes that can land me in jail for more than ten years. Moreover, I'll definitely be punished by the Church." Kapusky, who didn't look thirty, drew a breath and said with a wry smile, "However, as long as I didn't cause too much trouble, those children and their parents wouldn't snitch on me because they also did the same thing. Even if they wanted to get a lighter sentence by helping the investigation by turning themselves in, they would still end up in jail for some time."

"Heh." Kapusky gave a self-deprecating laugh. "Some of the children have already told their parents who I am. They've gotten gangsters to warn me to resign within a week and stay away from school. I agreed."

Klein gently nodded his head.

"It's a good thing to change environments. Of course, don't do similar things again. Bewitching ignorant children to commit crimes is a heinous act."

"I won't, never again. I never imagined that it would be that dangerous. I just saw that they had the same interests as I did which was why I wanted to teach them and lead them to search for the secrets of immortality. As for digging graves, many doctors did it a long time ago." Kapusky sighed with some lingering fear.

The color of his emotions matches his current state of mind… From the sound of it, he doesn't seem to be a member of the Numinous Episcopate… Klein thought for a moment, then he bluntly asked, "Where did you learn the Spirit Dance from?"

"Spirit Dance? Ah, I usually call it the Dance of Death." Kapusky was taken aback at first before he came to a realization. "An old gentleman taught it to me."

"An old gentleman?" Klein pressed.

Kapusky's mind turned adrift as he recalled his memories.

"He was a vagabond. He fainted in front of my house because of a serious illness.

"At the time, I didn't know that he was ill. I thought he had simply fallen unconscious, so I helped him home. I gave him a heated towel and applied some ointment for him.

"After he woke up, he told me not to send him to a hospital or clinic and that death was not the end.

"I experienced the deaths of my parents and several relatives and was very interested in such things. So, I chatted with him and found out that he had profound knowledge and an admirable philosophy in this area. He seemed to be very satisfied with my curiosity and even performed a miracle of killing a mosquito and waking it up."

This introduction… I've read at least ten novels with similar openings in my previous life. They were all novels about bringing an old grandpa, who was on the brink of death, home out of kindness, only to have a fortuitous encounter… Klein's mouth twitched.

"So, you left him at home?"

Kapusky nodded solemnly and said, "Yes. If it wasn't for the lack of time, I would have even wanted to become his student.

"During those few days, he taught me a lot of knowledge and the Dance of Death. Unfortunately, this period of time was too brief. As soon as I built momentum, he died, leaving behind only a copper whistle."

Before he finished his sentence, Kapusky took out an exquisite copper whistle that didn't seem old.

"This is it."

I have one too… It's probably at the Ancestor grade though… Klein lampooned, and he thoughtfully asked, "How long ago was this? What did he look like? Where did you bury him?"

"Half a year ago. His most obvious feature was his graying hair and red spots on the side of his face. He told me to bury him in the garden out back." Kapusky did a calculation of the dates.

It's not Mr. Azik, but the chances are that he's a member of the Numinous Episcopate and not someone of a low Sequence… Klein changed the subject and asked, "Apart from the Spirit Dance, you also learned the resurrection ritual?"

"I've only learned half of that ritual. I used some scattered knowledge and folklore to slowly improve it bit by bit," Kapusky answered very honestly.

Improved it based on folklore? Oh, that poor black cat, may the Goddess bless you… Klein resisted the urge to draw a crimson moon on his chest.

"What else?" he pressed.

"Yes, and this copper whistle. I think it's the key to communicating with the world beyond our senses." Kapusky raised it and blew at it, sighing. "Every time I finish blowing it, I can feel the surroundings turn cold. It's as if someone is watching me and tugging at me…"

While he was speaking, Klein, who had his Spirit Vision activated, saw water patterns ripple out from the ground. A cold air spread out alongside it, and the fire and light dimmed a little.

Next, a skull with three protruding, unfocused eyes emerged from the ground. Around the skull, there were many black jointed tentacles.

A tentacle reached out, touching Kapusky's leg and tugged at his clothes from time to time, appearing rather impatient. However, Kapusky didn't respond at all, as though he hadn't noticed.

Is this a messenger? The copper whistle is used to summon their corresponding messengers… What's the meaning of you summoning it without giving it a letter? Klein was stunned seeing this scene.

At that moment, Kapusky looked at him excitedly.

"Did you feel it? The surroundings turned cold! The gas lamps have dimmed too!

"I'm not lying! Someone is watching me and tugging at me!"

The horrific-looking messenger tried to touch Kapusky, over and over again, but in the end, it didn't receive a letter and went back "underground" in resignation.

The corners of Klein's mouth twitched slightly as he saw this scene. He whispered to himself in his heart, *I take back what I said about him. He's not a rookie, he's an utter noob.*

He's not even a Beyonder!

I had thought that he was someone who had just stepped through the door of mysticism to learn the basics, but now, it seems like he hasn't even found the location of the door…

Corpse Collectors of the Death Sequence pathway can all see ghosts and spirit bodies directly…

Combined with how Kapusky had acted by using the copper whistle to command the zombie after the ritual, Klein was convinced that he wasn't lying. He sighed silently.

Then, he thought of a question, *If I were to write a note and hand it to that messenger, where would it be delivered?*

A true member of the Numinous Episcopate? Some senior member?

Suppressing this thought, Klein nodded and said, "It has indeed turned cold."

After replying, he quickly changed the topic. "Have you felt anything unusual since the old gentleman's death?"

"Eh… Not before, but in the last two weeks, I'd have the occasional feeling that someone around me is like a corpse—the kind that can be awoken." Kapusky asked feeling both curious and afraid, "Is it a hallucination?"

It's in line with what Adol said. He isn't lying.… Klein stole a glance at the colors of Kapusky's aura and sincerely told him, "I suggest that you go to a cathedral at least three times a week for the next two months, attend mass, and listen to preachings.

"If you do not wish to do so, you can first prepare a grave for yourself."

"Alright…" Kapusky answered, feeling disappointed.

He thought that it was a manifestation of his improvement!

Klein contemplated for a moment and said in a commanding tone, "Take me to the old gentleman's corpse."

"Ah? Okay." Kapusky was about to refuse, but then he instantly recognized the reality of the situation he was in.

He picked up his tools and led Klein out the back door from the kitchen, into a withered garden, and stopped in front of a slanted tree.

Klein stood by his side and watched Kapusky skillfully dig through the dirt, revealing the slate underneath.

Having finished with the upper layer, Kapusky used his tools to pry open the slate.

Oof!

The slate was pressed against the soil that had been dug out just moments ago. The not-so-deep tomb was veiled in the crimson moon's luster that faintly penetrated through the clouds.

Kapusky subconsciously looked over when he suddenly let out a miserable scream, retreated a few steps, and fell to the ground.

There was no rotting corpse or bones in the tomb. The bottom layer was littered with white feathers, dyed in yellow oil!

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CHAPTER 304
FEATHERS

White Feathers?

Looking at the corpseless grave, Klein suddenly thought of a word: "Angel!"

In the canon of the seven major Churches, they were filled with legends of Angels and Saints. The former had one characteristic—a pair of pure white wings on its back, and as many as two, three, or even six pairs of pure white wings.

However, in the blink of an eye, Klein remembered something else

Mr. Azik had once described his dream to him—one that seemed to indicate his different lives.

One of the scenes was inside a dark mausoleum. There were many opened ancient coffins beside him, and in the coffins, there were corpses with white feathers growing from their backs!

Is this a special characteristic of the Death pathway, or a strange phenomenon caused by the Numinous Episcopate? Klein didn't say a word as he restrained his emotions and calmly looked at the white feathers stained with yellowish oil at the bottom of the grave.

His initial judgment was that the old gentleman wasn't an angel, as the terrifying Sequence 2, or even Sequence 1 Beyonders, would certainly produce intense effects on their surroundings when they died. For example, the Holy Artifact, the ashes of a Saint which had been stored behind Tingen

City's Chanis Gate, would extend almost invisible thin, black, and cold lines so as to seal the people and things around it.

Of course, it's also possible that he didn't actually die… He's like Mr. Azik? Klein bent down and picked up three white feathers with his black-gloved right hand.

He planned to do some divination above the gray fog when he returned home.

At that moment, Kapusky came to his senses, scrambled to Klein's side, and looked at the grave with a hint of fear.

"Where's the body?"

Klein looked at him and said in a low voice, "Maybe he left by himself"

"He left by himself…" Kapusky repeated in horror, now fully aware of how terrible it was for the dead to awaken.

His legs trembled as he muttered to himself, "B-but I didn't use the resurrection ritual on him."

Klein turned around and looked at him for a few seconds.

"Death is not the end."

"Death is not the end… Death is not the end…" Kapusky was quite frightened by his own beliefs as he blurted out, "W-will he come back?"

Well, the copper whistle had summoned a messenger which probably corresponds to the old gentleman. In other words, by giving the messenger a letter, it is equivalent to sending a letter to the old gentleman—a man who has been dead for almost half a year… Heh, I wonder where he went and what kind of state he's in… In response to Kapusky's question, Klein gave him an indifferent reminder.

"Don't blow that copper whistle again."

"You mean the copper whistle will draw him back?" Kapusky asked in horror.

Before Klein could reply, he asked again, "C-can you help me throw this copper whistle into the Tussock River?

"If you can't, I-I'll do it myself."

Weren't you interested in the philosophy of death? Klein lampooned as he reached out to take Kapusky's copper whistle.

He was planning on sending the dead man a letter when the conditions were right to see what would happen.

Of course, the prerequisite for all of this was that he was certain that there wasn't too much danger involved.

After instructing Kapusky to fill up the grave again, Klein had a brief exchange with him about the "Spirit Dance" and the corresponding mysticism knowledge, enriching his own knowledge. He also asked Kapusky in detail about how he laid the old gentleman's body, facing down, in accordance with his last words.

Under certain special circumstances, using "Spirit Dance" to replace part of the cumbersome setup for ritualistic magic would be more effective and simple… Seeing that he had achieved his goal, Klein warned Kapusky to stop dabbling with the so-called resurrection rituals.

Then, he left the street through the garden and took a long detour via carriage to East Borough.

After changing back into his previous clothes, he returned to Minsk Street and entered his bedroom. After a series of actions, he carried the three white feathers and Kapusky's copper whistle above the gray fog.

Seated in The Fool's high back chair, Klein conjured pen and a paper. He wrote a divination statement he had long thought of: "Its origins."

Then, he held the three white feathers and leaned back in his chair.

As he chanted silently, Klein entered a dreamland. It was a blurry grayish-white all around him.

In this world, there was rich darkness without any light. Suddenly, the darkness was dyed with a crimson shade. A thin, pale hand reached out of the yellowish-brown soil.

A figure slowly got up. He didn't lift the stone slab, but he pierced through the soil directly.

Under the crimson red moonlight, the clothes on the figure's back were tattered, and white feathers grew out one after another.

The white-haired man tilted his head, revealing the red spots on his face, as well as his blank, emotionless eyes.

It began to walk, struggling through the surrounding fences, heading deeper into the darkness until it disappeared far away.

The dream shattered and Klein woke up.

White feathers sprouted from the back of the corpse… Its state resembles Miss Sharron's, but it's clearly different as well. It gave off a very heavy and corporeal feeling… It seemed to be phasing between a human's body and a spirit's body in a semi-natural and incomplete transformation? An envoy that's connected to the real world and the spirit underworld? Klein tapped the edge of the long table and thought for quite a while.

Then, he divined whether there was any danger in using the copper whistle he received from Kapusky at that very moment and received a positive

answer. Furthermore, the spirit pendulum moved with great amplitude and high frequencies.

It's a pity that I can't directly use the copper whistle above the gray fog. The messenger wouldn't be able to enter at all; otherwise, there wouldn't be any danger… After muttering to himself, Klein descended through the gray fog and returned to the real world.

…

Early morning, in the relatively refreshing woods in Empress Borough.

The Apothecary, with a round face who was in his thirties, appeared in a secluded corner and stored the herbs that he had secretly planted into a leather bag that he carried around with him.

After completing the mission for the day, he straightened his back, and he began to stretch his body. He mumbled to himself in great satisfaction, "Sure enough, my physical constitution has improved. I'm no longer like what I was before where I was relatively resistant to poisonous elements.

"However… Why is my Sequence 8 Beast Tamer? What does this have to do with Apothecary?

"Well, an Apothecary tames and uses plants and parts of animals that have lost their lives, while a Beast Tamer tames and uses living animals. Does it include Beyonder creatures?

"Then, will my Sequence 7 be able to tame and use humans?

"The old geezer didn't even tell me the name of Sequence 7, nor did he give me the formula. When I stabilize, I'll have to try contacting him."

The Apothecary began punching and kicking to get used to his strengthened body. He only stopped when he was utterly exhausted.

Whoosh… While panting, he began to consider a serious problem: *How should a Beast Tamer act?*

"Beast Tamer… how should it be done? Look for animals and tame them?" As the Apothecary was mumbling to himself, he suddenly sensed something and looked towards the artificial lake.

There was a huge golden retriever running happily.

The large golden retriever seemed to notice his gaze as it suddenly turned its head to look at him.

As their gazes met in midair, the large golden retriever froze for a moment. Then, it nimbly turned around and ran away, disappearing without a trace.

…

In the Hall family's luxurious villa.

Susie returned to a piano room and sat beside Audrey's feet, her tongue hanging out as she panted heavily.

It waited until the blonde girl finished playing a song before it said in fear, "Audrey, I met a scary guy.

"His eyes were scary!"

"Is that so? What did he want to do to you?" Audrey asked, curious and concerned.

Susie thought for a moment and said, "I don't know either. In short, he's very dangerous. That was my intuition."

"What does he look like?" Audrey considered letting the guards and attendants warn the man.

"I didn't see him clearly. I feel that he is my natural enemy!" Susie replied in all seriousness.

Your natural enemy? A dog-type nemesis? Audrey gave a reserved smile.

"Susie, don't go into those woods for now."

"Woof, Audrey, were you in a bad mood? I could tell from your piano music," Susie asked.

Audrey nodded gently and said, "Yea… I just received word from Glaint that Fors and Xio wanted to inform me that this evening's gathering has been canceled. I was originally planning to exchange some Beyonder ingredients for you."

And also attempt to come into contact with people from the Psychology Alchemists… she added silently in her heart.

"Why?" Susie asked, puzzled.

Audrey thought for a moment before replying, "It's said to be a result of the serial murders."

…

On Saturday morning, Backlund's air was as bad as usual.

Klein was trying to make a noodle dish which he loved to eat as a child. For this, he bought higher quality flour, added water and sugar, and mixed it to form a pot of thin "paste."

Then, he poured oil into the pot and moistened the surface.

After the oil heated up, he scooped up some of the flour paste with his soup spoon and poured it to the side of the pot, spreading it thin.

Amidst the sizzling sounds, he spread out several flat pieces of bread, and the fragrance of the flour gradually emanated.

When he was almost done, he removed the soft flat pieces of bread, one by one, and put them on the plate. Then, he added water and turned the remaining materials into batter.

As soon as he returned to the dining room with the flat bread and "paste," Klein impatiently tore off a piece and stuffed it into his mouth.

The flat piece of bread only had a rich fragrance of wheat and a sweet taste that whetted his appetite. It was simple and plain, but it was exceptionally delicious.

It's the taste from my memories… Klein quickly ate, occasionally drinking a mouthful of the paste.

As he was almost done eating and started to slow down, the doorbell suddenly rang.

A new commission? Klein took off his napkin, wiped his hands, and got up to go to the door.

Before he touched the handle, the image of a visitor appeared in his mind.

It was a middle-aged gentleman with white sideburns, a thin face, and an outstanding temperament.

It was the private detective, Isengard Stanton, who could get an invitation from the police!

Why is he here? Klein opened the door in puzzlement and asked with a smile, "Good morning, Mr. Stanton. Is there something?"

Isengard took off his half top hat and smiled.

"Good morning, Mr. Moriarty. I wish to work with you. I believe you're an excellent detective. After all, you previously managed to lead your investigations all the way to East Balam Dock and the Dock Union all by yourself."

"Cooperate?" Klein didn't hide his surprise.

Isengard tapped his black cane and replied in a deep voice, "To find the serial killer behind the recent chain of serial murders.

"The police has already offered a reward of 2,000 pounds."

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CHAPTER 305
THE DETECTIVE EXCHANGE

2,000 pounds? That's enough to drive all the bounty hunters and private detectives in Backlund crazy! This isn't like Rear Admiral Hurricane Qilangos who was out at sea for extended periods of time and had a bunch of subordinates. It's a bounty that can easily be touched if one reaches out…

Well, a pirate with combat prowess comparable to a Sequence 5 was worth 10,000 gold pounds, and a Sequence 6 murderer would have to be at the value of 3,000 to 4,000 pounds to be reasonable… Could it be that the Nighthawks and Mandated Punishers have misjudged the serial killer to be a Sequence 7, rather than a quasi-expert who is about to advance to Sequence 5?

It's very possible that the ritual that The Sun mentioned is rather ancient. Perhaps after the Cataclysm, it has rarely appeared again, and the few great Churches and military don't have any information regarding this… There's an underlying problem. The Church of the Goddess, the Church of the God of Steam and Machinery, as well as the Augustus royal family was said to have risen from the Cataclysm. It's reasonable if they aren't aware of the past, but the Church of the Lord of Storms have always insisted that they are one of the oldest… Could it be that their age is referring to a period of time after the devils retreated back into the Abyss?

After hearing Isengard Stanton's words, the first thing that flashed across Klein's mind was to assess the amount of the bounty, and then he allowed his mind to wander and made many connections.

"What's your opinion?" Isengard noticed that Sherlock Moriarty seemed distracted and pressed him.

My opinion? Klein was momentarily stumped.

A normal private detective would've definitely agreed, both because of the bounty and because of the well-known detective in front of him. A friendship with Isengard would provide him with great benefits in the detective circles.

The problem, however, was that Klein wasn't a normal private detective. He was worried that he would run into the Nighthawks who were in charge of the investigation.

Although I now have a beard, glasses, and a change in hairstyle, and the few Nighthawks who have seen me only a few times wouldn't recognize me, what if it was Madam Daly? However, it also isn't right to turn down the request as that wouldn't make sense. It would appear bizarre and suspicious… Furthermore, I do hope to catch that Devil as soon as possible. Otherwise, I don't know how many innocent girls will be killed… Klein hesitated for a few seconds, then he smiled.

"I've recently taken on a very troublesome case. I'm afraid I don't have much spare time."

Before Isengard Stanton could speak up, he added, "I can participate in the discussion and help to look through the information and analyze the clues, but I don't think I'll make any specific investigations."

I'll do a divination later. If there's a problem, I'll also hold back from sharing my opinion and purely be a spectator… As he spoke, Klein quickly formulated a plan.

Holding the black cane in his hand, Isengard pondered for a moment and said, "No problem.

"I've gathered more than a dozen detectives and have enough people to perform the investigation. What I admire the most about you is your excellent reasoning and analytical skills. Without as many resources as me,

you actually managed to go all the way to the East Balam Dock and went to the Dock Union.

"If we do capture the criminal and receive the bounty, I'll distribute the rewards according to everyone's contribution in a reasonable manner. Trust me, I have some credibility in this business."

"Alright, I hope for a pleasant partnership." Klein reached out with his right hand and shook it, feeling the dry warmth of Isengard's palm.

It wasn't easy for a middle-aged gentleman in his forties or fifties to maintain such a warmth in Backlund's late autumn. This added to Klein's suspicions that Isengard was a Beyonder.

"Likewise." Isengard smiled and nodded.

At that moment, Klein realized that he was being somewhat impolite, so he smiled and said, "Sorry, I forgot to invite you in, let's talk about this over coffee and tea?"

"Thank you for the offer. I've already arranged for the detectives to come to my house at nine in the morning to discuss the case. My assistant is waiting for them there." Isengard took out a marvel of mechanical beauty—a silver pocket watch with complicated engravings—opened it, and he said, "We need to head over there to meet them. Will that be a problem?"

"Not at all. Let me use the bathroom first and have a change of clothes." At this moment, Klein suddenly rediscovered the feeling of being a Nighthawk again—striking evil down, maintaining order, and protecting the people.

In the bathroom, Klein went above the gray fog and received an acceptable answer through divination. He quickly returned to the real world, put on his coat and hat, took his cane, and followed Isengard into a rental carriage where he sat beside him.

Isengard looked at him and asked while seemingly in thought, "I'm very curious about how you managed to discover that Siber's death was related to the Dock Union at East Balam Docks?"

I didn't discover it… It's a misunderstanding… Klein considered the question seriously to fabricate a lie.

With a smile on his face, he answered vaguely, "The crux of the investigation was to first determine that Siber's death was done by a copycat. This point was all thanks Reporter Mike Joseph. After confirming this, using the clues about Siber's route from Golden Rose, together with other clues, I had a matching guess, so I disguised myself as a reporter to perform the investigations."

Isengard nodded slightly, and without wasting any more time on the subject, he went on to give a more detailed account of the serial murders than the newspaper had described, especially the latest case.

Time flew by as the discussion and exchange progressed. The carriage arrived at a slightly old building in the Hillston Borough.

The house's lighting wasn't very good. Even though there wasn't much fog in Backlund today, it remained rather gloomy. Isengard Stanton led Klein through the spacious living room and into the activity room where the fireplace had been lit.

Klein looked around and saw about sixteen detectives, who had filled every available seat in the activity room.

"Sherlock?" A surprised voice sounded; it seemed to be very familiar with Klein.

Who is it? Klein looked over in surprise and realized that Detective Stuart, who he had just bade farewell yesterday, was actually here.

He carefully looked around and recognized Detective Kaslana, who had been protecting Adol, and her assistant, Lydia.

"What a coincidence." The corners of Klein's mouth curled up into a smile as he approached Stuart.

Stuart squeezed to the side, vacating half of his seat, and said with a pat:

"Maybe it's not a coincidence. I've read about it in a magazine before. There's a psychological phenomenon called synchronicity. Just thinking about it can make it happen. Haha, that's a joke."

At this point, Isengard introduced Klein to the detectives present, "This is Mr. Sherlock Moriarty, an excellent detective."

With his endorsement, Kaslana and the others looked at Klein with much more trust than before, believing him to be an outstanding private detective.

Klein nodded in response, sat down next to Stuart, and casually asked, "Is your commission over?"

"Yes, Adol's situation has improved, and something seemed to happen to that 'bad company' of his, and they're unable to threaten him any further, so we lost our jobs." Stuart laughed and said, "I was planning to rest for a few days, but Mr. Stanton summoned me, so I came to take a look. Actually, this is also good, as I really don't like to take on strange, scary cases. Oh, scary as in those with paranormal elements. Compared to those, I'm more willing to take on murder cases!"

After an assistant had poured each of them a cup of coffee or tea and distributed the information, Isengard sat down in a reclining chair, took out his pipe, and slowly rubbed it.

"I don't think any of you would be unfamiliar with this recent chain of serial murders. Do you have any thoughts on this case? Speak out so that we can engage in a discussion over it."

Stuart, whose face was thin and had a tiny mustache, raised his hand and spoke first.

"I just read through the information and discovered that the police didn't start investigating the case based on the identity of the victim.

"I don't think the criminal could've figured out with his eyes if the victim was once a street girl. He must've had contact with them. This is such an important clue, but the police actually missed it! God, this is unbelievable!"

*That criminal most likely recognized the victim with the naked eye… *Klein muttered to himself.

The majority of the private detectives echoed Stuart's doubts. Only Kaslana, Isengard, and a few others remained silent.

"This is a very important direction. Stuart, get a few friends to continue this line of investigation." When the discussion subsided, Isengard calmly gave a comment.

In the time that followed, the detectives argued, raised their voice to retort, stood up at times in order to pace around to collect their thoughts. During this whole time, Klein listened without comment.

When the exchange was almost over, he suddenly raised his hand and said, "I want information on the unsolved serial murders in the last twenty years spanning across Backlund and even the entire kingdom."

The room suddenly fell silent for a few seconds, and most of the private detectives were momentarily unable to understand Klein's intentions and thoughts.

Isengard put his pipe to his nose, inhaled its scent, and said thoughtfully, "You think that this isn't the murderer's first series of crimes?

"You suspect him of having committed similar crimes before, even if the modus operandi is different?"

It isn't a suspicion, but almost a certainty… Klein replied in his heart.

This was his reasoning based on the information provided by The Sun.

Since the killer was working hard to advance from Sequence 6 to Sequence 5, what did he do at Sequence 7 as a serial killer?

If he hadn't committed similar crimes, it would've been difficult for him to digest the potion. Even with the accumulation of time, where there was a significant chance of losing control when advancing from Sequence 7 to Sequence 6. Furthermore, there was a high risk for Beyonders in the Abyss pathway to lose control.

Hence, Klein decided, that regardless of whether the murderer knew the "acting method," he must've done serial murders during his time as a Sequence 7 for various reasons.

This way, even if the process of digesting the Sequence 7 potion wouldn't take years to complete, together with Sequence 6, twenty years would be quite a reasonable limit. After all, if one was too old, regardless of whether one had digested the potion or not, advancing to the next Sequence would've been too dangerous. As the ritual progressed, the person would become increasingly insane, leaving behind obvious clues.

At the current stage, the murderer is calm and has the ability to interfere with divination and tracking. There were almost no loopholes, but he might not have been the same during his early days of inexperience!

When he first completed a serial murder case, there was a high chance that he wasn't that cautious!

This was the follow up which would provide the best clues!

Many thoughts flashed through Klein's mind, but he nodded and replied, "That criminal's modus operandi doesn't make him seem like a rookie.

"I have reason to believe that he has done such cases before!

"By combining the past and the present, we're more likely to grasp the crux of the problem."

Hearing his answer, the detectives whispered to each other in discussion. After a brief silence from Isengard, he sincerely praised, "A brilliant idea!"

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CHAPTER 306
GIANT BISHOP

In the evening, Klein sat down on a reclining chair in his activity room. Warmed by the fireplace, he picked up the information that Isengard's assistant had just delivered.

As soon as his idea received praise from the great detective in the morning, Kaslana immediately claimed that she needed the same piece of information. Stuart had murmured that he had believed Klein was an excellent detective, given his calmness and composure when he faced Adol's case, but he hadn't expected him to be that outstanding.

At the same time, he told Klein that if he needed help, he could find him. He knew a lot of people in the detective circles in Backlund.

Isengard Stanton also promised to immediately contact the police and try to provide the corresponding information to the detectives who needed it before nightfall.

He truly was very trustworthy.

At the next Tarot Club, I'll have to ask Little Sun through The World about the characteristics of Sequence 6 Devil and what powers the Beyonders of this Sequence possess… I didn't plan on involving myself previously, so I had forgotten to gather the corresponding amount of information. However, since I've decided to help, it's best to be prepared. At the very least, I would know what's happening when danger rears its head… Klein thought for a few seconds, then he lowered his head and, under the light of the gas lamp, began to look through the unsolved serial murders in the last twenty years of the Loen Kingdom.

There were fewer than he had expected.

There were a total of four in Backlund, five in the other cities, a total of nine in total!

Yeah, although this world doesn't have the concept of DNA yet and lacks many necessary detective skills, with the impetus of the Emperor, there's already a rudimentary form of fingerprint investigations. Furthermore, there's mediumship, divination, dream entry, and other Beyonder methods! The police usually wouldn't seek out Beyonder teams from the three major Churches for individual murder cases that don't involve the nobles, the rich, or officials. However, a serial killer has very negative repercussions. It easily causes panic, so they'll definitely make the wisest choice… This way, having only a few unsolved serial murders in the past twenty years is reasonable and logical. Klein quickly understood the reason.

He gathered his thoughts and began flipping through the cases, one after another.

In the absence of sufficient information to perform a divination, he had initially selected two serial killings that might be related to the current incident and intended to use them as an initial starting point.

One case occurred four years ago. There were five victims, all single prostitutes with a child. They had been mistreated before they died but lacked any evidence of sexual intercourse.

The police in charge of the case at the time thought that the murderer must've known the whores, or else it would've been impossible to precisely select individuals with a child. They had identified the suspects from the people who lived nearby and from the regular customers of several of the whores, but in the end, they failed to find the real murderer.

Although the dossier only made a brief note, Klein could clearly tell that they had asked for the help of Beyonders from the three major Churches. Unfortunately, they were still unable to crack the case.

With the Beyonder powers of the "Abyss," being able to tell signs that a woman had once been a degenerate doesn't go against the law of mysticism. Likewise for recognizing an individual as a prostitute, but it doesn't make sense that they would know that the woman was single with only one child… The police were right. What was the problem? The real murderer was like me, able to resist dreams, divination, mediumship, and evade the investigations from Mid-Sequence Nighthawk and Mandated Punisher Beyonders?

*It's possible. Although the Church doesn't lack knowledge about the "serial killer," the murderer might have had some fortuitous encounters! *Klein picked out some problems from his own standpoint.

*I'm analyzing them by being part of "their kind"…I really didn't fail to live up to the name of Moriarty… *He gave a self-deprecating comment and decided that the first target would still be the four from Backlund.

*Yes, I'll get Mr. Stanton to confirm the suspects' current address and condition through the police, and I'll ask Stuart to get others to help. That way, I wouldn't appear directly, so as to avoid encountering any official Beyonders. After the situation has been clarified, I can gather the suspects' belongings and move them above the gray fog to make metaphysical deductions. *Klein quickly worked out a plan.

The second case had taken place eleven years ago. Four cases of dismembered corpses had happened in succession. Originally, these cases were considered as isolated cases until the police began having suspicions over the way the bodies were handled. Only then was it confirmed that it was a case of serial murders. The victims were men and women who had worked till late at night before they returned home. They weren't robbed, and there had been no common connection between them.

Due to the delay—time which was very valuable when the crime was first committed—the case failed to produce any clues pointing to a suspect.

*This is a problem caused by mishandling the case. If they had quickly received the help of a Spirit Medium, the wraith of the deceased might even gather around the murderer… Of course, it's also possible that the wraith can be "killed" by the murderer, just like this case… There's probably only ashes of those victims left. It will be hard to do any investigations through them… *Klein rubbed his temples, and when he saw that it was evening, he stopped considering the case and got up from his reclining chair to leave Minsk Street.

He had something to do that night!

He wanted to go to the area south of the bridge, to the Harvest Church on Rose Street, to find Bishop Utravsky in a bid to obtain the Apothecary formula. He had already divined to see if it was dangerous or not.

To Klein, having an Apothecary as a subordinate was extremely helpful.

He could get injured or fall sick. He could encounter enemies who could harm him, and an Apothecary who he could find at any moment would be someone he could rely on.

After making a detour to East Borough, Klein disguised himself and took the steam metro to cross the Tussock River and arrived at the district south of the bridge.

Along the way, the darkness along the metro line and the corresponding gas lamps formed an unforgettable scene.

While on the public carriage, Klein came to Rose Street and found the tiny Harvest Church which was easily recognizable.

The golden cathedral had a more striking steeple and a Sacred Emblem of Life engraved on its outer wall. It was a baby surrounded by the symbols of wheat, flowers, and spring water. It stood out from the surrounding buildings.

At that moment, the cathedral's lights were dim, and there wasn't a single devotee inside.

Klein sneaked in from the side, carefully dabbing his face with paint rather than relying solely on his ability to create illusions.

In the hall of the cathedral, rows of pews were arranged neatly. Right at the top, at the front, there was a large Sacred Emblem of Life. Candles were lit on both sides of it.

A tall man in his forties or fifties wearing a brown clergyman's attire sat in the front pew.

Just by sitting there, he was like a small mountain, giving off an extremely oppressive feeling.

The man wore a bishop's bonnet, and his eyebrows were light and thin. There were obvious wrinkles at the corners of his eyes, his cheeks, and the corners of his mouth. He had his eyes closed tightly, his hands clasped as he pressed them to his chin, as if in the most pious of confessions.

Suddenly, he opened his eyes, revealing a patch of light blueness.

"The Mother's Church will not reject anyone. Why didn't you take the main entrance?" The forty to fifty-year-old man didn't raise his head as he spoke in a low and gentle voice.

"Are you Bishop Utravsky?" Klein walked out of the shadows.

The tall man in the brown bishop's attire replied gently, "I prefer to be called a Father. Father Utravsky."

"Alright, Your Grace." Klein deliberately laughed. "Your name and your height tell me that you're from Feysac. Why do you believe in Mother Earth?"

Bishop Utravsky raised his head slightly and stared at the Sacred Emblem of Life ahead of him and said with emotion, "I was born along the coasts of Midseashire, Indaw. I was a man who was passionate about combat and killing."

Indaw? He really is from the Feysac Empire… Klein nodded indiscernibly.

Midseashire was the natural border between Loen, Intis, and Feysac. The east coast belonged to Loen, most of the west coast belonged to Intis; and to the north were the famous port cities of the Feysac Empire, such as Indaw.

In addition, the Midseashire spread to the northeast, penetrating through the Feysac Empire's territory and connecting with the North Sea. There were many islands in that part of the sea that were the habitats for polar bears and sea lions.

Hunting polar bears and sea lions were a traditional festival for the citizens of Feysac.

Just as his thoughts began to wander a little, Bishop Utravsky continued looking forward and said, "I committed a serious crime and fled to the Sonia Sea where I became a ruthless pirate.

"I was lucky enough to meet a missionary of Mother Earth before I fell into the true hell of the soul.

"After that day, I understood the value of life, understood the charms of all living things, and gained the joy that stems purely from life itself. I swore in front of the Mother Earth's Sacred Emblem that I would spread her faith in other countries to make up for my bloody past.

"Thus, here I am. I came here."

Amidst his calm and emotional voice, Bishop Utravsky stood up. He was over 2.2 meters tall, and his build was sturdy. His robes were tight, and he

looked like a giant from the legends who reappeared on the Northern Continent.

A real giant is three to five meters tall, with a single vertical eye… The citizens of the Feysac Empire are generally tall… It's no wonder that they've always claimed to be the remnants of giants, believing that they have the blood of giants… Klein had to raise his neck to look at the priest's face.

"What are you doing here?" Bishop Utravsky asked with his head lowered.

"I heard you have a request and that the reward is the Apothecary formula?" Klein, who had donned a disguise, went straight to the point.

Bishop Utravsky fell silent for a few seconds before saying, "Yes.

"Although I'm not sure where you learned of this, it's true."

"Then, what task is it?" Klein asked with a smile.

Utravsky sized him up seriously for a while before saying, "I don't think you can fulfill my request."

"Perhaps I can? I need to know the details before I can make an evaluation." Klein frowned.

Utravsky stood there like a giant pillar. After a few seconds, he said, "My request is…"

At this point, he closed his eyes and said, "Kill me."

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CHAPTER 307
DAWN PALADIN

Kill you? It was the first time Klein had heard of such a request, and for a moment, he didn't know how to respond to such a task.

He even started to suspect if there was a conspiracy.

Bishop Utravsky opened his eyes and looked down at Klein.

"Kill the old me."

…Father, can you not have such long pauses when you're speaking… Klein's mouth twitched as he asked in puzzlement, "Even in the legends and myths, no one can return to the past. I'm afraid this task of yours can only be accomplished by the seven gods."

"No, I mean, killing the past me which has never died as it resides in the depths of my heart." Seeing that Klein was still confused, the slightly hunchbacked bishop said, "The former me, who used to love to kill and fight, didn't completely die just because of my contrition. I can clearly sense that he's still living inside my body, always wanting to regain control of everything, and I'm constantly suppressing him, hoping that he will be redeemed through mass, ascetic cultivation, and preaching, making him truly believe in the teachings of the Mother Earth and become one with me again."

Simply put, the imprints of the past are too deep, and they fiercely conflict with your current life, resulting in a split personality… The pseudo-psychologist and keyboard warrior, Klein Moretti, made a preliminary

judgment and said in deliberation, "It's a psychological problem. I think what you need most is a psychiatrist."

"I've attempted that before. Perhaps you aren't aware. There is a Doctor Sequence among the Beyonder pathway that the Church of Mother Earth controls, which is also known as Healing Pastor in ancient times. They've studied my problem and believe it's not as simple as a psychological ailment. It's also mixed with the inclination of losing control. If the past me defeats the present me, I will lose control without a doubt and become a monster," Utravsky said with a sigh.

Then what you need is the Spectator pathway's Sequence 7, Psychiatrist… Klein thought for a moment and said, "Your words make me believe that you've found a way to solve your problem, but you only lack a suitable executor, am I right?"

"Yes, all these years, besides preaching, I've also been searching for people and objects that can help me. In the end, with Mother Earth's blessings, I obtained a very mystical item. It is said to be a relic of an ancient dragon." Seeing that Klein wasn't scared away, Utravsky answered with some hope, "It allows the wielder to enter the deepest part of the target's soul, or, in other words, the bottom of the target's dreamland. There, a corresponding scene will be materialized. That way, you can see the past me directly, and then, through combat, eliminate him. In that special state, once he is truly dead, he will never appear again."

As expected of the mysterious world; there's actually such a method to treat someone with split personalities… Klein sighed with emotion and cautiously asked, "What restrictions are there, or what harm will it cause to the holder? Why do you think I'm incapable of completing this task?"

Bishop Utravsky looked down at Klein and said, "Once you use that mystical item, although the owner will remain conscious, there are many layers to the soul or dreamland. The past me will be able to make full use of this point to deceive you, or conversely, they can even kill you. And after a set period of time, yes—five minutes—that mystical item will make you

completely lose consciousness, and your mind will never be able to return to your body and become its sacrifice.

"In this way, you will become a vegetable.

"In addition, as a result of the scene's materialization, if you're killed in the deepest part of your heart—or to put it in another way, the lowest level of the dreamland—similar side effects will occur. It's equivalent to true death.

"Believe me, the past me is much stronger than you think."

So that's how it is… However, this issue isn't a problem at all for me. I'm someone who can stay awake and rational during spirit channeling and dreams. Even if that mystical item wants to make me lose myself completely, there's no need to worry too much. As long as there's room for struggle, I can take four steps counterclockwise and chant my honorable name, and directly head above the gray fog… The problem is, how strong is the past Bishop Utravsky, and what are my chances of defeating him? What restrictions or taboos are there in fighting in a materialized spiritual world? Klein thought for a while and said, "How strong were you, Father Utravsky? I don't think I would definitely lose."

Bishop Utravsky's eyes turned adrift for a moment.

"I was a warrior.

"I have already reached Sequence 6 of my Beyonder pathway, becoming a Dawn Paladin."

So he's not a Beyonder of the Planter pathway… He himself said that he had committed a crime and become a pirate before being converted by the Church of Mother Earth… Sequence 6. Yes, it's not like I can't win. A Magician is the kind of Beyonder that's much stronger if they make preparations in advance. Also, due to my uniqueness, the deepest part of my heart, or the lowest level of my dreamland, can be considered as my home

ground… Klein pondered for a few seconds and said, "Will that mystical item weaken him?"

"Yes, but it's still his main region of activity, so the weakening wouldn't be too great. At most, it would be like he had already fought an intense battle." Utravsky recalled his previous attempts.

That just raises my chances… Klein continued, "Is there anything I need to pay attention to in that special environment?"

"Just like real combat, effective attacks are always effective, illusions will remain illusions, but one thing must be noted, he can bring you into a few other levels of the dreamland at any time, creating a situation where it's hard to determine whether it's reality or an illusion." Bishop Utravsky emphasized, "So, you have to be at least at Sequence 6, or some other special Sequence 7 to be able to complete this mission, and the risk is nothing trivial. Heh, if I didn't swear on a Holy Artifact of Mother Earth that I wouldn't ask the Church for help before my missionary succeeds, things wouldn't have been so difficult."

So that's how it is… I'm not afraid of a dream… The corner of Klein's mouth curled up.

"Final question. Are there any points to take note of when fighting a Dawn Paladin?"

Bishop Utravsky frowned his wrinkled face and said with a sigh, "This is something that requires absolute secrecy for Beyonders.

"However, as long as you participate in enough battles, others would often be able to conclude certain traits. Besides, the more details you know, the higher the chances of success are, right?"

"Yes," Klein answered frankly with a nod.

In a reminiscent tone, Bishop Utravsky said, "A Dawn Paladin possesses a power akin to that of a giant, enabling the area within a 40-50 meter radius to be basked in the light of dawn. Such light cannot only dispel illusions, but it also has the special ability to exorcize wraiths and specters, and it can even weaken evil spirits.

"They can conjure Dawn Armor around their bodies which would be equivalent to specially forged full-body armor that doesn't weigh anything or inhibit their motion in any way. If destroyed, recovery would require a certain amount of time.

"He can also conjure different weapons. The strongest weapon would be a two-handed rapier. It's often called the Sword of Dawn; it's sharp, solid, and each strike has a purification effect.

"Apart from that, Dawn Paladins have a type of Beyonder power to create a Hurricane of Light. It can directly destroy a person's body, eliminate wraiths, and damage evil spirits."

There aren't a lot of Beyonder powers, but they are my natural enemy. They have high offensive strength and defense, and they're not afraid of illusions. The only good news is that, other than for facing wraiths and specters, the mysteriousness of a Dawn Paladin is very low… Klein listened as he simulated a combat situation in his mind, searching for the most reliable way to deal with a Dawn Paladin.

The level of mysteriousness he was referring to implied strangeness, unpredictability, unfathomability, and incomprehensibility.

Bishop Utravsky looked at him quietly. He didn't press him or drive him away.

After gradually formulating a plan, Klein raised his head, looked over, and said, "Perhaps I can give it a try, but I will need to leave for a few minutes to confirm that you're not lying."

Bishop Utravsky replied with a slightly stunned voice, "No problem.

"However, I must remind you once again. Although I don't know where your confidence stems from, do not belittle the past me. He's extremely skilled in combat."

"I wouldn't joke with my life." Klein pressed his hand to his chest, bowed, and stepped out of the Harvest Church. He found a secluded spot and quickly went above the gray fog to make a divination.

After obtaining an answer that there was a certain danger but at tolerable levels, he immediately returned to the real world. From the beginning to the end, it only took him about ten to twenty seconds above the gray fog.

Following that, Klein returned to the Harvest Church and said to Bishop Utravsky, who stood in his original spot, "I'll take this commission."

Bishop Utravsky stared at him intently before slowly saying, "If you succeed, not only will I give you the Apothecary formula, but I will also gift you a mystical item without much of a negative side effect."

Klein was taken aback at first before he sincerely praised, "Father, you truly are a generous person!"

Bishop Utravsky didn't say another word. He took a strange candle from a concealed pocket in his brown clergyman's tunic.

The outer layer of the short candle seemed to be wrapped in a layer of human skin, but there were also several bumps on it.

Its wick was about the length of a finger segment and was entirely black in color. It was covered in tiny densely packed scale-like patterns.

"Ignite it with your spirituality." Utravsky handed the tiny, strange candle to Klein.

Instead of following his instructions, Klein took out a matchbox, took out a few of them, and put them in his trouser pocket. He lit and blew out a few other matchsticks before throwing them at various corners of the cathedral. Then, he adjusted the positions of the paper figurines, paper notes, long strips of paper, Azik's copper whistle, and various charms.

This was in preparation for the worst case scenario that he could imagine.

After all of this was done, Klein snapped his fingers, causing a blue-colored flame of spirituality to appear.

Sizzle!

He held the flame close to the top of the tiny candle and watched the black wick light up.

Nothing seemed to change, but Klein was acutely aware that he had entered the world of the mind.

Directly in front of him, he saw Bishop Utravsky still standing in his original spot. His sturdy body, which was more than 2.2 meters tall, gave off a sense of oppression.

The repentant bishop looked down at him, his facial muscles contorting. Following that, his expression became abnormally ferocious.

Soon after, Klein discovered that the surrounding light and shadows were rapidly transforming, and it felt like he was experiencing a real, intense battle.

Pa!

At the end of the battle, Bishop Utravsky fell heavily to the ground. His breathless body had blood flowing profusely.

Klein's mouth twitched as he saw the scene before him with a clear mind. He silently evaluated.

What a professional performance.

But I know that this is a dream within a dream.

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CHAPTER 308
A PREPARED MAGICIAN

When Klein looked down again, he could no longer see the strange candle wrapped in human skin; instead, a faint, slightly sweet scent kept lingering around his nose.

Ignoring the Bishop Utravsky's body that was lying down in a pool of his own blood, he took out his matchbox and lit one matchstick.

The blood on the ground disappeared as soon as the spark was produced, and the messy church hall became tidy once again.

The gargantuan Utravsky slowly got up, looked down at Klein, and said with a twisted face, "It actually didn't have any effect…

"It's no wonder that you dared to accept this task.

"However, this is your misfortune. I didn't actually want to kill you."

As he spoke, the candlelight on both sides of the cathedral began to flicker visibly. The entire hall suddenly brightened, but it was mild and not blinding; it was as if the morning sun had just come in.

The invisible spirit quickly vanished, and Klein, without a word, threw the match, flexed his cheeks, and simulated a sound.

Bang!

An invisible Air Bullet shot out and struck Bishop Utravsky heavily in the chest, producing a resounding sound. However, the "giant" bishop had at

some point equipped a set of silver armor that covered his entire body. It included gauntlets, breastplates, and a helmet.

At that moment, a spiderweb-like crack appeared on the silver "metal" at his chest, but it didn't completely shatter. It even began to slowly recover.

Bang! Bang!

Klein produced a series of sounds, creating two Air Bullets that followed one after the other, sending them towards the enemy's chest in a bid to completely destroy the enemy's defenses with a continuous barrage of attacks!

However, he saw that in Bishop Utravsky's hand was a heavy, wide rapier, looking as if it was condensed from light. Using it, he deftly blocked the two Air Bullets, producing two sounds which were almost impossible to distinguish.

Creak!

Utravsky took one step forward, and the cathedral seemed to shake. At the same time, his two-handed rapier swept down at Klein in a gesture that looked as if it was going to shatter the building.

Before the sword arrived, the wind that it carried with it almost caused Klein to lose his balance.

Such terrifying power! As this thought flashed through his mind, Klein deftly jumped to the side and bent over, ready to roll on the spot.

Bang!

The two-handed rapier in Utravsky's hands smashed into the ground, shattering the stone slabs and causing cracks to spread rapidly in all directions.

Screech! He dragged the rapier along the ground as he switched from a vertical slash to a horizontal sweep, causing sparks to fly.

This move was meant for opponents who loved to roll!

Just as Klein was about to hit the ground, the image of himself being struck by the two-handed rapier appeared in his mind. He quickly swung his arms and reached out with his palms. He lightly pressed and once again leaped into the air.

Woosh! The resulting wind blew across the dust on the ground, and the terrifying rapier flattened the nearby pews.

However, before Klein could counterattack, the "giant" bishop chained his attack without any pause.

One strike, two strikes, three strikes… five strikes, six strikes, seven strikes… Utravsky seemed to possess extremely robust stamina. His unceasing, storm-like attacks lasted for dozens of seconds.

He used the simplest of sword techniques—slashing vertically, slashing diagonally, sweeping horizontally, thrusting forward, and bashing forward—to demonstrate what was the most effective and reasonable way to deal the most damage. And the range of the two-handed rapier reached a terrifying extent.

Klein jumped, rolled, and ran. He didn't have the opportunity to use his powers and appeared rather pathetic. If it wasn't for the matches that he thrown ahead of time in different corners of the cathedral and how the candle on both sides of the altar had yet to be extinguished, allowing him to "flash," he probably would've been slain by his enemy.

As expected of a Beyonder job that's adept at combat… No mistakes, no weaknesses… Klein didn't panic because of this. Amidst his rolling and dodging, he constantly looked for any flaws that the enemy had, waiting for his attacks to reach a moderate stage.

Finally, he discovered a problem with Utravsky's sword techniques.

The two-handed rapier was too long and too large, and it had an obvious flaw in close combat!

With this thought flashing in his mind, Klein took advantage of the rapier's vertical slash to roll forward to the left, and then, with a push of his palm, he quickly rolled to the spot between Utravsky's legs.

As a "half-giant" who was over 2.2 meters tall, Utravsky would have his legs spread apart from simply standing. His silver crotch was clearly visible.

As soon as he rolled over, Klein's left hand reached into his pocket, pulled out a long piece of paper, and turned it into a sharp and hard cane. He then inserted it into the gap at the side of the enemy's crotch, stabbing into the body of the "giant" bishop!

This would be a fatal blow!

However, at this moment, his heart trembled. The image of a rapier stabbing down as boundless light, forming a terrifying storm, engulfed his entire body appeared in his mind.

A trap! Utravsky's trap! Klein didn't hesitate. He pressed his right hand down, jumped forward through the gap between the legs of the "giant" bishop's legs, and arrived behind him.

By the time he finished this set of motions, Utravsky was holding the hilt of his sword with both hands, bending his waist and lifting his sword up to thrust straight down into the stone slab in front of him.

With a cracking sound, rays of light surged out of the sword's body like the first rays of dawn. They turned into a hurricane and swept across the surroundings.

Without a sound, the stone slab disappeared from where Klein had been, and the earth beneath it became nearly ten centimeters thinner. The silver armor on his legs and crotch was also damaged, shattering inch by inch and revealing his skin.

His trap was to sustain damage in exchange for the death of his enemy.

At this moment, Klein, who had leaped behind Bishop Utravsky, finally found an opportunity to counterattack. He twisted his body midair, puffed out his cheeks, and simulated gunshot sounds at the back of his enemy's head.

Bang!

Bang!

Two Air Bullets hit the back of Utravsky's head in quick succession, shattering the silver metal in that area and then splitting it into pieces, exposing a completely unprotected area.

Klein was about to give him a fatal blow when Utravsky suddenly straightened up, twisted his waist, and violently swept the two-handed rapier backward.

The speed was so fast and the attack was so ferocious that Klein seemed unable to dodge it. However, he pulled out a piece of paper from his pocket and placed it in front of his body.

Clang!

The collision between the sword and the piece of paper produced the sound of metal being struck. The crisp sound of metal striking metal filled the entire cathedral.

Klein was sent flying like a tennis ball. The paper in his hand was torn apart, leaving behind only a tiny piece in between his fingers.

In midair, he was immediately faced with the violent and swift pursuit of Utravsky. The situation was precarious.

However, he didn't panic in the slightest and only shook his wrist.

The tiny piece of paper flew up, and a spark rapidly expanded, completely enveloping Klein.

Hum! The rapier sliced through the ball of fire, but it didn't cause any damage, only creating a small spark.

At the candle on the right side of the cathedral, a faint yellow flame spread out, forming a figure whose face was painted with oil paint.

Klein reappeared and pulled out another long strip of paper from his pocket.

Pa!

With a flick of his wrist, the paper turned into a sturdy whip. The surface of the whip was even burning with scarlet flames.

Pa! Pa! Pa!

Klein lashed out at the "giant" bishop from a distance.

However, his weapon quickly disintegrated under the attacks of the two-handed rapier.

And that was precisely Klein's goal!

Pa! Pa! Pa! With a snap of his fingers, he sent streaks of fire flaring up from the ground, blocking Utravsky and burning his unprotected legs.

The Dawn Armor's recovery was rather slow!

As the tongues of fire leaped upwards, his legs were charred black and a crimson color was seeping up his legs.

However, this didn't affect the "giant" bishop's agility. He let out a low growl, and like a steam train that had finally accelerated to its highest speed, he charged through the flames and appeared in front of Klein.

This speed was unbelievably fast!

Soon after, the two-handed rapier in Utravsky's hands cracked, turning into spots of light that swept forth in all directions.

Almost instantly, Klein fell into a situation of certain death.

The matches he kept on him were ignited, and an intense flame engulfed him.

However, this wasn't as fast as the Hurricane of Light. Just as the scarlet red flame appeared, it was immediately engulfed!

Klein's body was torn asunder as it was reduced to shreds, but they ended up losing their thickness and turned into bits of paper.

Behind Utravsky, a column of scarlet red flames flared, and Klein stepped out.

He took out a matchbox from his other pocket and threw it at the enemy, as if to ignite all the remaining matches in one go and, through the restraints of the small space, create a reliable explosion.

The matchbox was aimed at Utravsky's lower body which no longer had any protection!

Klein raised his right hand and snapped his fingers.

At the same time, Bishop Utravsky jumped up on his back, bent his knees, and withdrew his legs.

Pa!

Accompanied by the snap of his fingers was an unaffected matchbox, but a loud bang. It was an Air Bullet that accurately tore open the back of Bishop Utravsky's head which lacked any protection. It was lethal weapon that had been prepared in advance!

His skull split open, and blood and white bits spurted out. With great difficulty, Utravsky turned his head around and said in a daze, "You…”

The matchbox, that was riddled with holes caused by the Hurricane of Light, fell to the ground. However, it remained unignited.

Klein laughed and replied, "I've never said that snapping my fingers could only be used to control flames and not shoot out Air Bullets.

"Look."

Pa! Pa! Pa!

He snapped his fingers repeatedly, allowing one Air Bullet after another to hit Utravsky in the head, shattering his helmet and cracking his head.

Bam!

Utravsky stopped breathing and fell heavily to the ground, shaking the cathedral hall slightly.

Pa!

Klein turned and snapped his fingers again.

The box of matches on the ground exploded, transforming into a scarlet flame that buried Utravsky's gigantic body.

Klein didn't attempt to sense the existence of the candle, but instead he relied on his own clarity of mind to force himself out of the lowest level of his mind.

Behind him, the corpse was wrapped in scarlet flames as the world around him disintegrated bit by bit.

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CHAPTER 309
CHOOSING ONE OUT OF TWO

The illusory feeling passed, and Klein saw the strange candle in his hand again, along with its black wick and palish-white flame.

The damage of the Dawn Paladin—the shattered ground, broken pews, and the sliced candles—had been restored to their pre-battle state. It was hard to tell where they had been damaged.

At some point, Bishop Utravsky, who had been standing opposite him, had taken a seat in the front pew, his back bent forward and his head buried in his hands. His hands were pressed to his temples.

Drip!

Drip!

Sweat trickled down his face and spread out from his feet. The ground was already completely wet.

When he sensed that the strange candle had been extinguished by Klein, he shuddered and raised his head to meet Klein's eyes.

His slightly turbid eyes were filled with tears, and his wrinkled face was streaked with tears.

However, his eyes were filled with emotion, joy, and clarity.

If it was said that this "giant" bishop previously appeared tall and heavy, then all that was left of him now was the heaviness of his body but without

the heaviness of his spirit.

At this moment, Klein felt like he was looking at a newborn baby.

Those tears were proof of new life.

The corners of Utravsky's mouth curled up slightly as he smiled kindly.

"You're much better than I expected."

"No, this is because I gained sufficient understanding in advance and made the appropriate preparations. As for the past you, not only were you unsure of your opponent's strengths, you were also greatly weakened. If I were to fight against you in the real world, I would be considering how to escape," Klein calmly replied.

A prepared Magician and an unprepared Magician are very different concepts… He added silently in his heart.

Bishop Utravsky didn't dwell on this problem. Brimming with relief from head to toe, he said, "Thank you, my friend.

"According to our agreement, I'll give you the Apothecary formula. I'll also give you an additional mystical item."

As he spoke, from his pocket, he took out what looked like a combination of a needle, a tube, and a container.

"You have two choices. This is one of the two choices you have. When I got it, I didn't know its name, and I never thought about naming it either. You're able to use it to draw out a tube of blood, your own blood. At a critical moment, you can transfuse it back into you. That way, your fatigue will disappear. Your ailments and injuries will be alleviated, and your strength, speed, balance, and other attributes will all be greatly enhanced." Bishop Utravsky pointed to the object in his hand.

"What about its limitations and latent dangers?" Klein asked rationally.

Utravsky looked at the mysterious patterns on the needle and tube and explained in detail, "After drawing out a tube of blood, you'll be weakened for a full twelve hours, and during those twelve hours, transfusing the blood back into you wouldn't have any effect. Of course, the specific time limit isn't that precise; it increases or decreases according to your body's condition. In addition, it's best not to use it too often; not more than once a week. Otherwise, not only will the transfusion bring you power, but it will also temporarily make you lose your rationality, and the short period when you have your blood drawn and turn weak will become your characteristic.

"In addition to these, it also has a problem. If you carry it around for more than half an hour, you'll become a little neurotic."

Fortunately, Bishop Utravsky didn't previously draw his blood. Otherwise, if the past him can transfuse his blood, my chances of winning would've been very, very low… This was the first thought that flashed through Klein's mind.

He frowned and was rather worried about the negative effects of the mystical item.

Regardless of whether it was a temporary loss of rationality, a twelve hour period of weakness, or a change in his mental state, these were all hidden dangers that didn't seem too problematic. But after seeing Rampagers and hearing the ravings of an evil god, Klein believed that a Beyonder's mental state was very important. If one's mental state remained at a nadir for an extended period of time, or if there were frequent anomalies, it would easily cause the phenomenon of losing control to happen. This was the same even if a Beyonder had grasped the acting method!

"What's the second choice?" Klein said after two seconds of silence.

Bishop Utravsky took out a simple brass key from his other pocket and smiled.

"This is called a Master Key. It can help you open any lock which doesn't contain mystical powers, as well as a small number of locks that are augmented with Beyonder effects. And in a place without any locks or doors, it can open a passageway that doesn't belong to reality. Heh heh, the premise is that there are no restrictions by Beyonder powers and the barriers aren't too thick.

"Its spirituality is completely restrained. When it's not being used, Beyonders cannot see any difference between it and a normal key."

Utravsky stood up again, leaving Klein no choice but to look up.

The "giant" bishop increased his pace and came to the wall at the side of the cathedral hall and pressed the Master Key against the brick.

He twisted gently, and his entire body seemed to sink into water as ripples were produced. He went through the wall and arrived outside.

In the same way, Bishop Utravsky returned to the cathedral hall and entered Klein's line of sight again.

"Have you decided on the mystical item?" the tall priest asked with his head lowered.

"Hmm, what are the latent dangers of the Master Key?" Klein asked after some deliberation.

Bishop Utravsky smiled warmly and said, "The person carrying it will occasionally get lost.

"According to what someone told me, one gets lost at random."

Lost? I'm a Seer with spiritual intuition… Klein mumbled, and his mind gradually came to a decision.

After a few seconds, he said, "I want the Master Key."

He didn't want his mental state to be affected, and he didn't want to accumulate the risk of losing control.

What a pity, what I want the most is that weird candle… It's akin to the deepest part of a soul, the lowest level of a dreamland. That's equivalent to my home ground… He sighed in his heart.

"Alright." Bishop Utravsky handed the simple brass key to Klein and took back the strange candle wrapped in human skin.

While Klein was examining the mystical item, Utravsky pointed at the back and said, "The Apothecary formula is in that room. I'll go get it. Wait here for a while."

Klein nodded in response. Taking advantage of the moment when Bishop Utravsky's figure disappeared from the hall, he took out a penny and divined if he had been lying about the Master Key.

After receiving an acceptable answer, he walked to the wall in front of him where a row of candles were placed and pressed the ancient brass key against the hard wall.

As he injected spirituality and turned the key, Klein's vision suddenly blurred and then became clear.

At that moment, there were no longer burning candles filling his vision, nor were there neat pews and straight walls. There were only withered grass and muddy land strewn with a bit of garbage. To the side, it led out to where a gas street lamp stood.

I really came out. Klein smiled, nodded, turned, and once again using the Master Key to successfully return to the cathedral's hall.

After more than ten seconds of waiting, Utravsky walked in with heavy footsteps, a roll of yellowish-brown goatskin parchment in hand.

"You can get an appraisal for this. If there's a problem, you can always find me at the Harvest Church. The "giant" bishop handed the Apothecary formula to Klein.

Main ingredients: Horn of an adult Flying Unicorn, 3 grams of a Royal Jellyfish's venom crystal… Klein swept his gaze, smiled and replied, "I will confirm its authenticity."

For example, divine it above the gray fog… He added inwardly.

Bishop Utravsky nodded slightly, and without another word, he turned around and walked to the Mother Earth's Sacred Emblem of Life.

He spread his arms wide and chanted in a low voice, "Thank you, Source of Life!

"Praise you, Mother of All Things!"

…

Klein put away the Master Key and the Apothecary formula. After Utravsky stopped, he said half-jokingly, "Could it be that my visit was arranged by Mother Earth?"

*Why else would you be thanking Her for? *The false believer of the Evernight Goddess, Klein, chuckled inwardly.

"Yes, everything is arranged by Mother Earth. Otherwise, my request for help wouldn't have reached your ears. I wouldn't be here in Backlund either. Nor would I have obtained this Mental Terror Candle," Backlund Utravsky said with a gentle smile without any signs of anger.

*Complete and self-consistent believer logic, but… *Klein suddenly felt that it was impossible to communicate with him. He pressed his hand to his chest, bowed, and said, "Thank you for your generosity. I should leave now."

He straightened his body and quickly retreated. He then rapidly disappeared from the main hall of the cathedral and from Rose Street.

Ten minutes later, he saw the golden façade of the Harvest Church from another direction, and he couldn't help but twitch his mouth.

I can't go back without divination? he silently muttered to himself. He really wanted to stubbornly rely on his own ability to overcome the fact that he was lost.

But his hand, which was faster than his voice, had broken the branches of a tree and made a makeshift dowsing rod.

Dowsing Rod Seeking could be used to seek people, as well as items and directions!

This time, Klein was able to return home without incident, and he even confirmed the authenticity of the formula and the latent dangers of the Master Key.

…

The next morning was a Sunday morning.

After waking up, Klein ate breakfast, took out a pen and paper, and wrote a letter to Isengard Stanton, asking him to seek help from the police to confirm the current status of the few suspects for the serial murder case from four years ago. Back then, the targets were single prostitutes with a child.

After folding the letter and stuffing it in an envelope, Klein put on a black stamp which was one penny in denomination. Putting on his clothes, he took his hat and cane, and he walked out of his house to post the letter at the mailbox at the end of the street.

Then, he saw Mrs. Stelyn Sammer and her husband, Mr. Luke dressed to the nines.

A rental carriage was stopped by their door.

"Good morning. Why are you attending a banquet so early in the morning?" Klein asked with some surprise.

Luke chuckled and said, "It's not really a banquet. It's more like us helping out."

Mrs. Stelyn raised her chin slightly and added, "Mary has successfully entered the National Atmospheric Pollution Council. There will be a grand ball tonight, and we have to help out in advance."

Mrs. Mary's wish has been fulfilled? Impressive… Klein sighed and said with a smile, "Please pass on my congratulations to Mrs. Mary for me."

Luke Sammer nodded and said, "You haven't read this morning's paper, have you? All the members of the National Atmospheric Pollution Council have been published.

"The Chairman of the council is Sir Ders Shaw and the First Secretary is Mr. Hibbert Hall."

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CHAPTER 310
NATIONAL ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION COUNCIL

Sir Ders Shaw? Mr. Hibbert Hall? Who are they? I don't know them at all… Acting as though he had no doubts, Klein said half-jokingly, "Let's hope that they can bring blue skies and sunshine to Backlund."

"Yes, although burning in your own fireplace is everyone's freedom and is a right granted by the law, blue skies and sunshine are more desirable things." Luke Sammer, a member of the Soot Reduction Association, sighed with emotion and pointed to the hired carriage. "We should go. Mary urgently needs some help."

Stelyn Sammer added, feigning a level of restraint, "There might be Members of Parliament coming to the banquet, from the Backlund district or from the kingdom."

"I can imagine the grandeur of this banquet." Klein flattered politely and watched the Sammers board the carriage and leave.

As he turned to head for the post office at the end of the street, a postman in a dark green uniform arrived in a carriage and delivered a letter to his letterbox.

*A letter for me? *Klein pulled out a bunch of keys and casually chose the one that was simple and had a brass color.

Kacha!

The Master Key easily opened the letterbox.

I just need to have this key on me in the future… Klein mumbled as he took out the newspapers he had subscribed to and the letter.

The letter was from Isengard Stanton.

He had also looked through the old and unresolved serial murders yesterday and had picked out the most suspicious ones, and after obtaining a preliminary confirmation from the police department about the present circumstances of the suspects, he had written to Klein, Kaslana, and the other private detectives, that were interested in this angle, to share his findings.

It included the two cases that Klein had focused on.

Great detective minds think alike… The letter I wrote just now was for nothing… Klein joked before returning to the living room.

According to Isengard, the random murder cases of people who returned late had resulted in a large number of suspects, but the suspect had never been narrowed down. After so many years, it was very difficult, almost hopeless, to try to find a new clue.

One of the four suspects in the other case was a teenager whose mother was also a victim—a prostitute and single mother who had him as her only child. He had been abused by his mother, had been the police's first suspect, but less than half a year after that case, he had been seriously injured in a gang firefight in East Borough and died in a surgical room at a charity hospital.

His body was cremated with people bearing witness before being buried in the cemetery.

As such, it was impossible for him to be connected to the current serial killer.

If he hadn't been cremated, I definitely would've dug up the grave to verify it.… Klein, who had once come back from the dead, seriously considered the possibility of the other party coming back from the dead.

Of the remaining three suspects, one had moved several times in the past few years. The police had lost track of his situation and needed more time to find him. One had gone through bankruptcy and moved to East Borough from North Borough, while the other was still running a grocery store on the same street.

Klein took out a fresh sheet of paper, described the situation, and then asked the recipient to observe the two suspects with specific addresses in secret. He emphasized, "The killers of serial murders are all cruel, brutal, and very aggressive. Please be careful not to get too close to them; act as if you're just an ordinary neighbor observing them.

"The information I need pertains to their recent mental state, such as whether they are irritable, whether they like to shut themselves in their rooms, rarely communicate with others, and whether they have beaten others up."

This was also the information he got from The Sun. After each kill, the Devil would eat the victim's organs according to the ritual and stay in a bloodthirsty, manic state until a new victim appeared.

After emphasizing the need to take note of the investigator's safety, Klein folded the letter, stuffed it into a new envelope, and affixed a black stamp to the surface.

Then he wrote down the name of the recipient: "Detective Stuart."

…

In Empress Borough, the opulent villa of Count Hall.

Susie was lying in the corner of the study, looking around as if bored.

With a bulging stomach, Count Hall took a puff with his pipe and said to his eldest son, "Do you know why I insisted on having you be on the National Atmospheric Pollution Council?"

Hibbert Hall replied thoughtfully, "You wish to influence the formulation of the relevant laws and policies?"

"No, although I'm the second-largest shareholder of the Constant Coal and Steel Consortium, I don't really care about this problem. I've been urging them to make adjustments accordingly. I have no doubt that fixing atmospheric pollution is a future trend.

"Hibbert, although our family has fixed seats in the House of Lords, and you will also become a Member of Parliament of the House of Lords in time, so why do some nobles have more influence than others when they are all Members of Parliament of the House of Lords? Notwithstanding the Speaker and other people with special statuses."

Hibbert thought for a moment before saying, "The title of nobility, wealth, commercial status, as well as the relationship between the government and the army?"

"That is only a part of it. In addition to one's own ability to handle matters, people will always rely on those with rich experience, and those who have participated in many similar matters. In the future, if you wish to have any achievement in politics, in addition to inheriting a seat, you will also need to try your best at participating in various matters and display the corresponding capabilities. Gradually, your activity will catch the eye of the various Members of Parliament. They will slowly find you trustworthy and that will be the source of your influence.

"Look at the current situation of the nobles in the Intis Republic, Hibbert. You should understand that with the passage of time and the development of society, the obvious privileges will be weakened, and one's title will become less and less important. It's just a title of honor, and the position and

influence of the business world is what you should pay attention to," Count Hall explained in detail.

"What if you encounter something you aren't good at?" Hibbert muttered to himself.

"Then pretend that you can handle it. Don't worry about wasting money; form professional teams, listen to their opinions, and make decisions. Everyone has a lot of areas that they aren't good at, and only money is multi-faceted." Count Hall gave words of advice.

Hibbert replied in enlightenment, "I see, Father."

At this moment, Susie, who was by the side, yawned in boredom.

When it was all over, she slipped into Audrey's art studio, repeated everything she had heard, and finally muttered, "I have no idea what they were talking about."

Audrey listened to her thoughtfully, then she said with a faint smile, "They were discussing a good thing that involves reducing the pungent smell you smell."

"Is that so?" Susie asked without fully comprehending it.

Audrey didn't answer and thought of something else.

She had intended to quietly draw attention to the bad conditions of East Borough, the factory area, and the dock area, but in the last two social gatherings, she had found herself unable to find an opportunity.

Those nobles, those Members of Parliament, and senior civil servants would never even talk about such matters. There was no way to steer them towards that topic even if she wanted to!

…

On Monday afternoon, Klein returned to 15 Minsk Street from the Quelaag Club.

As Stuart had yet to provide any results from his preliminary investigation, and since he was temporarily unable to find a suitable candidate to become an Apothecary, Klein had nothing to do yesterday and today. Therefore, he simply went to the Quelaag Club to practice his shooting, read, and get some free food.

In the process, he got to know many other members of the club.

This is the lifeblood for future business opportunities… Klein sighed with emotion, took four steps counterclockwise and went above the gray fog.

He went about his preparations, step by step, first conjuring the fake World, familiarizing himself with the control of the All-Black Eye, and then sent a message to The Sun that the Tarot gathering was about to begin.

After all of this was done, Klein waited for three o'clock to arrive. Then, he reached out to touch the corresponding crimson stars and established a firm connection. The Magician had her own illusory star as well.

Under the pretext of concentrating on her writing, Fors Wall sent Xio away, and for a moment she was dazzled by the sudden rush of gray fog.

In the blink of an eye, she found herself above the mysterious and serene gray fog. She was inside a majestic palace, and in front of her was an ancient, mottled bronze table. Surrounding the table were one blurry figure after another.

One figure after another? One figure after another! Are these the gathering members Mr. Fool spoke of? Fors felt that the members of this secret gathering were all very, very powerful Beyonders.

Except for me… she thought, without confidence and full of fear.

However, looking at it from another perspective, since I can join this gathering as a Sequence 9, the other members might not necessarily be very strong. The requirement for this gathering is obviously not about strength, but for some other reason, a member must manage to establish a connection with Mr. Fool… Fors quickly rejected her first judgment and relaxed a little.

At the same time, Audrey also discovered that there was a new person at today's gathering.

*It's a woman… Is it Xio or Fors? Has she passed the examination? Or is it someone else? *Audrey nearly forgot to greet Mr. Fool in her bid to take a closer look at the features of the new member.

No matter how blurry the figure was, she could still see her hair color, silhouette, her accent, and verbal tics!

Hmm… I must also take note. At the very beginning, Mr. Hanged Man had managed to identify me as a noble from my special pronunciation of certain words, and from my habit of using certain special words… Audrey stood up, lifted her skirt, and said to Klein at the end of the long bronze table, "Good afternoon, Mr. Fool."

After the greeting, she didn't conceal her curiosity. She looked at the new member who was seated at the same row as her and asked with a smile, "This is?"

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CHAPTER 311
OBSERVING EACH OTHER

Klein sat in the seat belonging to The Fool and looked around.

"This is Miss Magician, our new member."

Then, he looked at Fors and introduced the rest to her.

"This is Miss Justice, and that is Mr. Hanged Man…”

As Fors nodded her head as a form of greeting the members with the corresponding code names, she observed the other members.

Miss Justice is blonde and seems very young; she sits with a graceful posture. Mr. Hanged Man has dark blue hair, as messy as seaweeds; he doesn't have a very bulky figure; he doesn't like to talk, but when observed by him, it gives me a sense of unease; he must be a leader of some faction… Mr. Sun looks like a teenager; he's very silent and reserved; other than that, I can't tell anything else—*maybe he's just as weak as me. Mr. World's eyes are very cold and quite gloomy; it's obvious that he isn't someone to be trifled with… *As a writer who had written a best-selling novel, she showcased her unique traits.

While she looked at the other members, they were also looking at her. Among them, Justice Audrey was the most attentive.

From her figure, I can eliminate Miss Xio. Brown hair and slightly curled. Is she Madam Fors? Temporarily, I can't rule out the possibility that Mr. Fool has pulled in someone else. Hmm, her pronunciation and the way her mouth moves is the same as her Backlund accent. Her aura and emotional

colors match as well… It's unlikely that Mr. Fool will specially create a fake image for the members, right? There's no need for "Him" to hide anything… After a few seconds of sizing Fors up, Audrey had nearly superimposed the blurry figure with her impression of Fors.

If I can find another trait in other areas, I can almost be certain… She waited with interest to verify her Beyonder powers.

At the same time, she felt that there was no need to reveal her identity to Fors.

It would be better to keep some secrets. Yes… Let's see when she finds out! Audrey withdrew her gaze, producing a faint smile on her face as she quietly watched from the sidelines.

At that moment, since there were no new Roselle's diary entries, Klein controlled The World and said, "I want to know about the Devil and Guardian Sequences."

He was certain that The Sun knew the details of Sequence 6 Devil because he had previously mentioned Devil Studies, and in order to not expose the fact that he was investigating a series of murders, he had deliberately added the Sequence 5 Guardian of the God of Combat pathway—also known as the Giant pathway. It was the mainstream path for Beyonders in the City of Silver, so it was impossible for The Sun to be unaware of it.

As for the corresponding Sequence 9 Warrior, Sequence 8 Pugilist, and Sequence 7 Weapon Master, Klein had long since learned of the details from the Nighthawks' confidential information. As for information regarding Sequence 6 Dawn Paladin, he had just learned of its information from Bishop Utravsky. Therefore, the only thing that he could ask and be willing to pay a price for without wasting money was Sequence 5 Guardian.

In addition, he didn't directly ask The Sun, but instead issued this request to everyone, because according to the way things had developed, it was

impossible for The World, who had just joined the Tarot Club, to know that the City of Silver held the Giant pathway.

"If it's just the Devil Sequence, I know a little about it." Alger, who had some standing in the Church of the Lord of Storms, interjected.

Derrick Berg glanced at him and without a thought, straightened his back and said, "I'm very knowledgeable about these two Sequences.

"The payment I want is information related to the Fallen Creator.

"The equivalence of the two pieces of information will be determined by Mr. Fool."

Having said that, he realized that he had not received Mr. Fool's agreement as he hurriedly turned his head to Mr. Fool to make the request reverently.

Sun, don't blame me. You were the one who made the request… The corners of Klein's mouth twitched slightly as he said with a chuckle, "Sure."

Furthermore, when it comes to the understanding of the True Creator, none of the ladies and gentlemen present can compare to me… he added boldly in his heart.

While they were discussing this matter, The Magician Fors was stunned upon hearing the conversation.

The Devil Sequence is the Devil pathway? Which Sequence number is it?

What is the Guardian pathway? Which Sequence number is it?

I've never heard of it…

Fallen Creator? The True Creator?

*God, they are actually exchanging information regarding the True Creator! *

That deity is known as the most ancient and powerful existence amongst the deities.

What kind of organization did I join?

After receiving a positive reply from The Fool, The World said without any hesitation, "Deal!

"I request a private exchange."

*I really want to hear it… However, I need to be frugal for the time being. There are still two more months until the new year. Endure it, Audrey! *Audrey blinked her eyes, reluctantly withdrawing her gaze from The Sun.

Their sights, vision, and spirituality were then shielded by Klein.

The World quickly lowered his head and "wrote" on a conjured sheet of paper his own understanding of the True Creator, including standard likeness such as "The Hanged Giant" and the "Eye behind the Shadow Curtains," including the information that members of the Aurora Order believed that this evil god was the original creator of everything.

At the end, Klein had included his impression of the evil god through his interaction with the evil god's spawn, the sensation of the deity's aura, and the sensation when listening to the True Creator's voice.

"Fallen, twisted, bloody, crazy, evil."

Then, as Mr. Fool, he gave a comment, "This piece of information is slightly more valuable than the information regarding the Devil and Guardian Sequences, but the difference isn't that huge."

"Thank you, Mr. Fool." Derrick earnestly received the piece of goatskin and read through it carefully a few times.

The thing he was most concerned about was that the True Creator was known as the creator of everything!

Twisted, fallen, crazy… Derrick repeated the words, vaguely able to see the dark tragedy that had engulfed everyone in the City of Silver for more than two thousand years.

Did the Lord not abandon us? It's just that "He" had gone mad… Derrick found himself able to resist using blasphemous thoughts to examine the Lord that created everything, the omnipotent and omniscient God who was worshipped by the City of Silver.

"It's time for you to answer my question," The World urged in a hoarse voice.

Derrick restrained his seething and sorrowful thoughts and said after two seconds of silence, "When different species of creatures consume the Devil potion, they will experience different types of mutation. They will have traits that are unique to them. Which kind of Devil would you like to know about?"

There are actually distinctions? Klein was puzzled.

He soon realized one thing—there was a blind spot in his thought process!

What if the serial killer wasn't a human but an animal?

After consuming the corresponding potion, it could transform into a Devil animal!

Step by step, one Sequence at a time, it will turn into a Devil!

Although the probability of an animal losing control far exceeds that of a human's, it was still not enough to deal with "what ifs"…I have to investigate this… But in that case, there would be more questions. Where did the Devil, mutated from an animal, obtain the potion and Beyonder ingredients? It should be impossible for it to join Beyonder circles… Klein maintained his silence and manipulated The World to say, "What I want to know is the common trait of all kinds of Devils."

Derrick recollected and organized his knowledge before saying, "The most frightening thing about a Devil is that if you can cause lethal damage to it in a very short period of time and take action to put that into practice, then he can sense, notice, and grasp where the danger comes from and who it came from, and then selectively kill or seek revenge on them.

"And this period of time varies from a few minutes to a day. Different Devils have different instincts."

This ability is a little scary… However, it's different from a Clown's intuition. It doesn't seem like it can be used in combat but instead, detect the source of the danger ahead of time. It's closer to the "Whim 1" ability I've read in xianxia novels in my previous life… I don't know if I can interfere with or even block this intuition in this mysterious space above the gray fog. Would Stuart end up in danger… Klein leaned back into his chair, seemingly uninterested in the subject of the discussion between The Sun and The World.

Seeing that The World didn't show any signs of surprise, Derrick continued, "They all possess the ability to gigantify their bodies and thus break free from their bindings, temporarily increasing their strength and speed; their skin is mutable, equivalent to wearing a layer of hard armor; their blood and flesh can act as a retardant and reduce damage; they're immune to most toxins and do not fear curses or flames to a certain degree; they have innate flame and corruption-type spells; they're cold-blooded, don't panic, don't feel fear, and have a strong ability when it comes to physical combat; they're also adept at using various items to inflict damage.

"Their greatest weakness is that they tend to lose control. Even if they don't, they will often display a cold-blooded and cruel madness, being easily controlled by desires such as bloodlust and murderous intent."

Really strong, as expected of a Sequence 6 Devil. Could it be that among the 22 Beyonder paths below the High Sequences, Sequence 6 or Sequence 7 are the thresholds of a qualitative change? In this respect, different Sequences differ, thus they have become the dividing lines between ancient and modern Mid-Sequences… Klein controlled The World and said, "I'm very satisfied with your information."

Derrick didn't act modestly. He nodded and said, "Guardians seldom suffer damage. Once they enter a defensive state and give up attacking, few can break through their defenses below that of the High-Sequences. It's the same for numerous types of damage. When they attack, their corresponding defense will decrease significantly, but it will still be stronger than full-body armor.

"Their Sword of Dawn and their Hurricane of Light, as well as their other Beyonder powers, allow them to deal damage to any type of monsters.

"They're not confused by illusions. They can help their comrades within a certain range by taking damage and protecting them."

…

Following the descriptions given by Derrick, Klein couldn't help but sigh in his heart.

Compared to a Guardian, a Dawn Paladin's defense is like that of a child versus an adult. A Guardian would probably be able to withstand the bullets of a steam rifle… In the wars of this era, they wouldn't die unless they were focused on by large-caliber cannons.

Footnotes:

Ch 311 Footnote 1

This is an ability found in the novel, Yang God, where an expert is able to predict danger once they reach a certain stage in their cultivation.

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CHAPTER 312
A FAILED DISGUISE

When Derrick finished, Klein manipulated The World to nod and say, "More detailed than I thought.

"Transaction complete."

Before The World finished his sentence, Klein had simultaneously removed the barriers insulating Justice, The Hanged Man, and The Magician.

After a few seconds of silence, The World looked around and said with a dark smile, "I don't have any more requests for now."

Having a rough understanding of the process and its characteristics, Fors was eager to purchase the corresponding Sequence 8 Trickmaster of the Apprentice Sequence.

She clearly remembered that Mr. Fool had said that the reason she was troubled by the full moon was due to her low natural order of life, and that the pain would decrease with the rise of her Sequence.

This made Fors eager to obtain the next formula.

*However, it would expose the Beyonder pathway I'm from… When everyone becomes familiar with each other and knows more about each other, exposure will become less of a serious matter. However, for the next few gatherings, I have to conceal that so that the members of the gathering won't be able to identify the real me… *After thinking rather calmly for a moment, Fors said, "I wish to obtain the formula of Apothecary and Trickmaster. I will pay in cash."

She intentionally added the Apothecary formula to her actual request in order to cause the others to have a misinterpretation. If any member of the gathering really had the formula, she would still take it. She could then sell it at a higher price to Viscount Glaint who been longing for this formula for a long time. In any case, she definitely wouldn't suffer a loss because of this and might even make a huge profit.

As for money, Fors wasn't short of it for the time being. Not only were the royalties of her best-selling book entering into her account over time, it was accumulating to quite a sizable amount. Furthermore, she also had additional income streams, such as the 650 pounds she had received from Miss Audrey in the Qilangos and Intis Ambassador Bakerland cases.

Poor Xio. She spent more than two hundred pounds to compensate the families of the two deceased which were involved in the Lanevus case. I wonder if Miss Audrey would pay her when things clear up… The note with Mr. Fool's honorary name on it was found in the bookcase of Viscount Glaint's house. Could it be that one of his ancestors was a member of this gathering? Is this a gathering that has been held regularly for decades if not centuries? Fors's thoughts were suddenly a little distracted.

Only two seats away from her, Justice Audrey was a little stunned when she heard Fors's request for the Apothecary and Trickmaster formulas before she accurately grasped Fors's thoughts.

*She's Fors! The Trickmaster is for herself, and the Apothecary formula is to be sold to Glaint. She can also do this to complicate the situation and fool the others… *Audrey nodded indiscernibly and was more certain of The Magician's identity.

*She's not of a very high Sequence. At best 8, most likely 9. Who knows where Mr. Fool pulled her from or if she's from a special place… Her accent has the peculiarities of Backlund, but she's not necessarily in Backlund… *The Hanged Man Alger was also observing the newcomer, making sure that she wasn't a threat to him.

The Sun Derrick didn't think too much about it. He was just trying to guess whether Miss Magician belonged to the City of Silver or if she was from the world where Miss Justice and the others lived.

Klein cast a look of pity at Miss Magician, not expecting much from her attempt to conceal her identity.

When you meet a Telepathist who is very familiar with you, you might not be able to conceal your true thoughts even if you know the other party's ability beforehand and are on guard against it. What's more, you didn't even know anything… The Fool, Klein, sighed in his heart for Miss Magician.

At the same time, he controlled The World who said hoarsely, "I have the Apothecary formula. 230 pounds.

"As for the Trickmaster formula, I'll do my best to find it, but I can't guarantee success."

There was no contradiction between exchanging the Apothecary formula for money and using it to groom a useful helper. They could be run in conjunction, so Klein made The World speak first so as not to be intercepted by The Hanged Man or The Sun.

As for the formula for Trickmaster, he only had some ideas.

From his point of view, the mystical item, Master Key, was most likely related to the corresponding sequence of Trickmaster's corresponding Sequence 9, Apprentice. If he were able to divine its origins above the gray fog, he might be able to find some clues.

Well, actually the most convenient way is to ask the existence suspected to be Mr. Door who keeps murmuring during a full moon. In addition to asking for help, he probably provides formulas and the "acting method" so as to make the target stronger and complete difficult tasks. Unfortunately, before the target is strong, they can't even hear his ravings. They will break

down and even be close to losing control. This results in a vicious cycle… Klein lamented.

Instead of responding to Mr. World's words, Fors looked around and saw that The Hanged Man, Justice, and The Sun had no intention of opening their mouths.

It was obvious that they didn't know the Apothecary and Trickmaster formulas.

"Mr. World, please try your best to find the Trickmaster formula as soon as possible." Fors fell silent for a few seconds before saying, "As for the Apothecary formula, I plan to buy it now. How should I make the payment?"

The other party seemed to be a man from Loen as well, and he's willing to accept gold pounds… But the gold pound has always been more recognized than the other currencies… As she spoke, Fors was also trying to determine The World's background.

The World completely didn't mind her sizing him up as he said softly, "You can sacrifice the money to Mr. Fool after you return. That way, the transaction will be closed.

"The exact sacrificial ritual is…"

Sacrifice? Mr. Fool can still accept sacrifices? His life's natural order has reached such a level? No wonder he used that tone to describe the owner of the ravings during the full moon… Fors listened and remembered, surprised and shocked, but she also felt that it was a matter of course.

After finishing his description, Klein displayed the Apothecary formula in front of The World and had the fake person hand it to Miss Magician.

"The transaction is witnessed by Mr. Fool, so you don't have to worry if it's fake."

"I trust Mr. Fool." Fors nodded immediately. She spread open the formula and began memorizing it seriously.

At that moment, Audrey, who couldn't bear to see her friend go through such labor, commented, "You can seek Mr. Fool's help during the sacrifice to recall the formula. You don't have to memorize it specially. If you encounter any problems, you can also pray to "Him" by reciting "His" honorable name"

"Him"? Miss Justice is actually using a salutation used to describe deities to address Mr. Fool!? "Him,""Him"…Could it be that he is really a "He"? But, why would he be willing to help us in doing such trivial matters… That's not right. As long as the ritualistic magic is done right, the seven orthodox gods will also often respond to their believers and complete their requests… Fors said to Justice, "Thank you for telling me that. Your name is just like your character."

"…" Audrey suddenly felt a little guilty.

She suddenly seemed to recall a problem as she hurriedly asked, "Miss Magician, do you know of the 'acting method'?"

"Acting method?" Fors looked at Justice in a daze.

She soon discovered that the other members such as The Sun and The Hanged Man had no additional reaction to the term. Clearly, they knew what it meant.

Today's gathering makes me feel like a country bumpkin who has just arrived in Backlund… I've been to so many Beyonder gatherings at the very least, alright! Fors thought, half sorrowfully, half joyously.

She couldn't help but want to write a novel with this feeling of hers, naming it "Miss Wall's Tour of Dreamland."

"You don't seem to know." Audrey made a definite judgment based on Fors's reaction and her usual performance.

She turned around and looked at the person shrouded in gray fog at the end of the long table.

"Mr. Fool, can I teach the 'acting method' to Miss Magician?

"If so, what price would she have to pay?"

Audrey had intended to ask directly if it was like before—trading the information for entries of Roselle's diary. However, she quickly remembered that there was a great overlap between the Beyonder circles of Fors and her own. Therefore, if she did that, she might lose many opportunities of obtaining Roselle's diary.

*It's not a very important problem since it's just a matter of time before Fors realizes that Mr. Fool wants Roselle's diary, and I would certainly have other Beyonder circles. However, she knows that I have a few pages of Roselle's diary, and if she wants to collect them, she will come to me immediately. However, Mr. Fool has read all of those diary entries… After this gathering, I have to find a chance to tell Fors that all the Roselle diary pages were accidentally lost… *Audrey predicted the chain of events and tried her best to convey her concerns to Mr. Fool in body language.

*What's Miss Justice hinting at? Oh, she knows Fors, but she doesn't want to reveal her identity, which means that she doesn't want the payment I request to cause any trouble in that regard… *Klein thoughtfully chuckled.

"You can make the decision. You can do the explanation since I do not wish to repeat what I've said in the past."

This is also a form of respect to the Goddess… he added inwardly.

Praise Mr. Fool! Audrey's heart leaped in joy.

She straightened her back and slightly raised her chin. She tried to look at Fors in a different manner as she said, "The 'acting method' is a method to speed up the mastery of potions and minimize the risk of losing control.

"Do you want to know about it?"

There's such a method? For real? Mr. Fool is such a lofty figure, so he definitely wouldn't lie about such a small matter! Fors widened her somewhat languid eyes, pursed his lips and said, "Yes!"

As long as one was a Beyonder, there was no way they wouldn't wish to learn of similar methods! Fors suddenly felt thrilled.

Audrey thought carefully and said, "There are two requirements. One, without the permission of Mr. Fool, you are not to teach the 'acting method' to others.

"The second is to pay 200 pounds."

Her original plan was to use Roselle's diary as a benchmark for the price. The number of pages she and The Hanged Man had used to repay the debt had been converted into a corresponding price, but in reality, Roselle's diary was sold cheaply because it couldn't be deciphered, and most of the time, it was impossible to determine which was the real one. Converting that to a total price was quite a letdown to the value of the acting method; therefore, she added a little more from that benchmark.

Hmm… If Mr. Fool's adorer is no longer short of money, then I will take the 200 pounds, and I will look for the diary entries to repay my debt with Mr. Fool… Audrey had already thought of a follow-up deal.

200 pounds? The method to reduce the risk of losing control is 200 pounds? Th-that's way too cheap, isn't it? Fearing that Justice would go back on her word, the surprised and happy Fors said without hesitation, "Deal!"

After she finished speaking, she felt her heart pain for the money. She felt that her bank balance was decreasing at a speed that was visible to the naked eye.

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CHAPTER 313
THE ANCIENT DEITIES

Audrey was about to apply for a private exchange when she suddenly discovered one thing. The World, who was seated at the other end of the long bronze table, didn't show any interest in the "acting method" at all. He didn't even have the urge to ask about it.

*Does he already know about the "acting method," or did he consult Mr. Fool privately? *Audrey mumbled to herself, still cautiously asking for a private meeting.

Then, looking at Fors, she said in a measured voice, in both her choice of words and pronunciation, "Our attitude towards potions isn't about grasping them, but rather it's about digesting them.

"The key to digestion is to "act," and the key to "acting" is the corresponding potion name."

"Why?" blurted Fors.

After a moment of deliberation, she added another question, "Then, how should one "act"?"

Audrey recalled Mr. Fool's pose and examples, repeating the description of the castle, the guards, the invitation, the disguise, and finally saying, "In short, the goal of 'acting' is to reconcile the body, heart, and soul, bypassing the stubborn resistance of the remnant headstrong psyche of the potion so as to assimilate and digest it."

As a fiction writer, Fors had a strong imagination. After Justice was done with her description, she had already sketched out the corresponding scenes in her mind, and she had basically understood what Justice was trying to convey.

Is that so…

So this is how you eliminate the remnant psyche influence in the potion and reduce the risk of losing control.

The more I think about it, the more I feel that this is possible!

…

The bewilderment in her mind gradually lessened, and the feeling of surprise slowly filled her heart.

Finally, she asked for confirmation, "Was this taught by Mr. Fool?"

"Yes, if not for Mr. Fool, we might've already lost control. Our continued existence is proof of the 'acting method's' effectiveness," Justice praised from the bottom of her heart.

Phew… Fors exhaled and felt her future brighten with hope.

*Could this be the fortuitous encounters described in all kinds of novels? This feels so good! However, I shouldn't be careless. Mr. Fool might be a malicious, evil god with deep secrets… *Fors reminded herself.

Immediately, she began to think about an even more important question: how to act as an Apprentice.

Just from the word alone, Apprentice means that one's skills are not mature enough in various aspects. Does this mean that one should still accept guidance and focus on studying? One shouldn't flaunt one's superiority and be arrogant, and one has to understand the insignificance of their own

strength? Fors quickly let her thoughts wander and didn't realize that the environment for individual communication had been discontinued.

At that moment, The Sun, Derrick, looked around silently, gritted his teeth and said, "I want to know which seven gods you are talking about, and the general situation regarding them."

He couldn't help but ask this question that had been plaguing his mind for a long time.

…*I know that!* Audrey almost failed to react at first, but she quickly figured out what The Sun was asking and raised her right hand slightly.

At the same time, The Hanged Man and The World also indicated that they could answer.

…*What are they doing?* Fors looked on blankly, trying to remember what had just happened.

After a moment, she remembered The Sun's question. She then began ruminating over the implied meaning behind his words.

It can't be? He actually doesn't know about the Seven Gods? Where did he come from? Fors looked at Mr. Sun, who was just a teenager.

In the Northern Continent, other than insensible children, there wasn't anyone who didn't know of the seven orthodox deities!

Even the poor who struggled to survive and the tramps were no exception!

To them, the occasional free food offered by the cathedrals was so tempting that the workhouse was a flame of despair.

*People from the Southern Continent's colonies? However, there's no need for him to ask such a simple question! Just find a cathedral and ask a pastor or a priest to preach a sermon, and you'll be able to figure out the relevant

content! Where does The Sun actually live? What a freak! *Fors looked from side to side while mumbling to herself, but Miss Justice, Mr. Hanged Man, and Mr. World weren't surprised.

At that moment, the fog-immersed Klein saw that there were three people eager to answer. He smiled and said, "Mr. Sun, who do you want to trade with?

"What are you willing to pay?"

The Sun Derrick pursed his lips and thought for a few seconds.

"I'll trade with each of them individually."

Only then can I obtain the most comprehensive information… In the harsh environment of the City of Silver, Derrick had matured quite a bit from his previous patrols and clearance operations.

He paused for a moment before requesting, "The reward is that you can ask me a question, the kind that I can answer."

"I agree. I'm very interested in the City of Silver." Audrey smiled faintly without any hesitation.

*City of Silver? Where is this place? Why haven't I heard of it? *Fors looked around blankly, feeling completely at a loss as to what they were talking about.

Audrey glanced at her and kindly explained, "Mr. Sun is neither in the Northern or Southern Continent, nor is he on an island in the ocean. The City of Silver is located outside of our understanding, or you can say he is beyond the limits of our exploratory efforts."

Are you kidding me? Fors subconsciously had this thought.

However, with that thought, based on The Sun's performance, and the fact that it was impossible that the others were ganging up to cheat her, Fors quickly accepted Audrey's explanation.

This secret gathering is even more incredible than I thought… Mr. Fool is more powerful than I thought… Fors exhaled silently and sighed with emotion.

Audrey vaguely read her thoughts, and for a moment she was tempted to flaunt about how the deaths of Rear Admiral Qilangos, Intis Ambassador Bakerland, and the swindler, Lanevus, was a result of the Tarot Club.

*What a pity. If Fors were to learn of these three things, she would immediately associate Audrey with Justice. I have to keep it a secret… Audrey, even if it's hard on you, you have to keep this a secret! *Audrey suddenly took a deep breath.

Since she didn't know much about the City of Silver, she didn't know what to ask. Fors didn't participate in the following transaction and chose to spectate from the sidelines.

As for The Hanged Man and The World, they successively agreed to The Sun's request.

The happiest of all was Klein, for this meant that he reaped thrice the rewards.

During individual communications, The Fool could hear the conversation! Klein obviously didn't have any plans of insulating himself.

*Sun, you sure are simple! *He laughed in his heart.

As there was a lot of information about the Seven Gods, Justice, The Hanged Man, and The World could only "write" what they thought was important. After a while, they each passed on their descriptions to The Sun.

Derrick quickly scanned through the information, and his eyes stopped on a few lines.

In addition to the Lord who created everything, the oldest gods are the Eternal Blazing Sun, the Lord of Storms, the God of Knowledge and Wisdom. Those churches were the oldest churches.

Why haven't I heard of any of these… I've never heard of any of these gods… I feel like there's something very important hidden here… Derrick knew that each Tarot Club gathering had a time limit, so he hastily ended his review, intending to go back and pray to Mr. Fool for help in awakening his memories.

Then, the first one to raise a question was Justice.

Due to the serial murder, she was interested in the Devil Sequence, so she imitated Mr. World and asked the appropriate questions.

Derrick answered with verve and added something, "In the corresponding Sequence 7, a Beyonder of the Abyss pathway can effectively interfere with divination and spirit channeling."

A Devil's powers sure are terrifying. I wonder if my Sequence 7 Psychiatrist will result in a qualitative change… Or would I need to be Sequence 6? Audrey felt a little apprehensive from what she heard.

The second question came from The Hanged Man.

He seemed to have considered this question for a long time. Looking at The Sun, he opened his mouth and said in a deep voice, "I want to know the creation myth of the City of Silver."

The slightly tense Derrick relaxed a little and said, "The omniscient and omnipotent God created everything and entered a state of deep slumber.

"The Giant King, Aurmir; the Dragon of Imagination, Ankewelt; the Elf King, Soniathrym; the Vampire Ancestor, Lilith; the Devil Monarch, Farbauti; the Phoenix Ancestor, Gregrace; the Mutated King, Kvastir; and the King of Demonic Wolves, Flegrea split the remnant powers of authority, becoming lords of the sky, land, and ocean. They ruled over reality, the spirit world, and the astral world. They were deities who ruled over various races and were truly deities, the ancient gods."

Flegrea? Klein, who was listening, suddenly noticed a familiar word.

Whenever he advanced, or when his condition was unstable, or when he came into contact with the remnant influence of the Antigonus family's diary, he would always hear some illusory, incomprehensible raving coming from somewhere.

"Hornacis… Flegrea… Hornacis… Flegrea… Hornacis… Flegrea…”

Klein had known for a long time that Hornacis was referring to the mountain range where the ruins of the Nation of the Evernight was, but he had never known what the word Flegrea meant.

And now, for the first time, he heard Flegrea coming out of someone else's mouth!

King of Demonic Wolves, an ancient deity!

But why was "He" involved with the Hornacis mountain range? Klein maintained his unperturbed position as he quietly listened to Derrick's recount.

"Some of them perished in the battle among themselves, while others were stripped of their power after the awakening of the Lord that created everything, the omnipotent and omniscient God.

"The first part is the creation myth, and the second part is about the City of Silver's true history."

Alger wanted to know more, but as The Sun was unwilling to say more, he could only stop in time and turn his attention to thinking.

The King of Demonic Wolves, Flegrea, had left the stage of history in the Second Epoch, in the Dark Epoch long before the Cataclysm? As he pondered, Klein manipulated The World to ask a question.

What he had wanted to ask was which Sequence allowed a Beyonder to freely switch between the body and the spirit, just as Miss Sharron did. If The Sun wasn't aware of the answer, he could consider something else.

But now, he had something more important to know about, so he hoarsely said, "Everything about the King of Demonic Wolves, Flegrea."

The Sun, Derrick, looked at Mr. World in astonishment and frowned.

"I don't know much about this ancient deity.

"He's also known as the Annihilation Demonic Wolf and the Evernight Demonic Wolf."

"Evernight Demonic Wolf… Evernight?" Klein slightly narrowed his eyes.

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CHAPTER 314
POSSIBLE

The Nation of the Evernight, at the peak of the Hornacis mountain range, believed in the Ruler of the Evernight, the Mother of the Sky… Is there some connection between that and the Evernight Demonic Wolf, Flegrea? The illusory ravings I hear are actually "Hornacis… Flegrea?"

What is the connection between the ancient god, Evernight Demonic Wolf Flegrea and the Goddess? According to Roselle, Sequence 0 is equivalent to a true god, and each sequence can only have one Sequence 0… The Goddess had inherited the power from the Evernight Demonic Wolf? He wasn't the oldest deity, nor was he the eye of the Creator as he claimed?

Yes, there's a circumstantial clue that doesn't count as proof. The Life School of Thought worships the moon, the crimson moon that evolved from the Creator's eye, but they don't believe in the Evernight Goddess…

Klein suddenly made several connections as he manipulated The World to speak.

"Is there nothing else?"

"No. Matters regarding the King of Demonic Wolves, Flegrea, is also considered a myth in the City of Silver." Derrick felt as though he had not given any answers. He suggested out of embarrassment, "Mr. World, you can change to another question."

Change the question? Little Sun, you're too honest… Then I won't stand on ceremony! Klein made The World say hoarsely, "Your honesty and trustworthiness leave a deep impression.

"I met a Beyonder before. He was able to freely switch between the body and spirit, and they were also able to direct zombies. Do you know which pathway this belongs to, and which Sequence it is?"

Although it was impossible for The Sun, who was located in the Forsaken Land of the Gods and the City of Silver, to form a connection with the capital of the Loen Kingdom, Backlund, Klein was cautious enough to change the pronoun referring to Miss Sharron from "she" to "he."

"By the way, he's not a High-Sequence Beyonder," The World added in a deep voice.

Derrick recalled the education he had received seriously before saying, "If he's not a High-Sequence Beyonder, then the Phoenix pathway can be eliminated."

"The Phoenix pathway?" Klein deliberately made The World show a certain level of surprise.

After attending so many gatherings, Derrick was very clear that there was a discrepancy between the terms used by the City of Silver and Miss Justice and company. Therefore, Derrick explained without finding it strange, "It's the Beyonder pathway that governs death and partly controls the spirit world.

"Its Sequence 9 is Corpse Collector."

So it's the Death pathway… From the looks of it, Phoenix ancestor, Gregrace, was Death during the ancient times… Klein sat at the end of the long bronze table in a composed manner. He controlled World as he nodded.

"I understand. You can continue."

Derrick replied immediately, "I can only think of two possibilities. One is a type of special Devil. Just like I previously said, the Devils that evolve from

different species can have their differences. There is a type that can freely switch between body and spirit, but they're rather rare. And they might not be able to direct zombies."

"Can they be humans?" The World asked.

"No, not that I know of any similar examples," Derrick said honestly.

"What about the second possibility?" Klein thought back to Miss Sharron's usual performance in battle, and The World changed his sitting position.

Derrick replied seriously, "Mutants."

"Mutants? Isn't that referring to monsters?" The World asked hoarsely.

Klein clearly remembered that Mr. Azik had mentioned that the term "Mutant" was the general term for humans that were put under a curse. Due to the different curses, Mutants transformed into different races.

They were usually the same as humans, but their hearts were always filled with a suppressed, twisted desire in their hearts. Their desires erupted when they came into contact with a certain scene or object, turning into monsters. They would then succumb to their desires for blood and bloodshed.

Every time they unleashed their desires, they would become slightly more merciless and apathetic. Finally, they would lose all their positive feelings that are expected of a human.

The most common Mutant was the Werewolf.

Derrick nodded frankly and said, "That's right. Mutants are the various kinds of monsters that evolve from humans due to the negative effects of certain Beyonder characteristics."

It's not a curse, but the negative impact of some Beyonder characteristic? Sitting upright in the thick gray fog, Klein found this to be different from

what Mr. Azik had described.

Is this the understanding of Mutants from before the Cataclysm? General knowledge in the City of Silver is quite precious to the Beyonders of the Northern and Southern continents… Klein became increasingly aware of the special nature of the Forsaken Land of the Gods.

At this moment, Derrick continued, "The characteristics which Mutants possess happen to form a Beyonder pathway. Therefore, ordinary people can turn into Mutants by consuming potions as well."

"A Mutant pathway? Which pathway is this referring to? What is the name of the corresponding Sequence 9?" Klein asked curiously through The World.

Derrick ignored the first few questions, treating them as a necessary supplement.

"In the City of Silver, the corresponding Sequence 9 is called Prisoner.

"The mind is the prisoner of the body, and the body is the prisoner of the world. This refers to the madness that is restrained and the desire that is oppressed."

Prisoner? This pathway is held by the Rose School of Thought. They're famous for their bloody sacrifices, and worship of the so-called Chained God… Miss Sharron doesn't look like such a cold-blooded, indiscriminate person… Wait a minute, Maric was apparently being pursued by some faction. Were he and Miss Sharron traitors of the Rose School of Thought? Their betrayal was because they didn't want to turn into crazy heretics? Klein speculated as he made The World say, "I'm very satisfied with your answer. Transaction complete."

Following that, a few members shared their experiences and news.

As for Klein, he ended the Tarot Gathering just before his spirituality was exhausted.

When the area above the gray fog returned to its peaceful state, even the fake World was gone. He then started to travel back and forth between the real world and the mysterious space, bringing the Master Key to the ancient palace.

Although I deduced from Roselle's diary that there is a high probability that there isn't a Sequence 0 for the Apprentice pathway, I can't be rash. If there is a Sequence 1 or 2, they might be able to counterattack effectively across space… And what if there really is a Sequence 0? I shouldn't gamble with my life… After Klein recovered, he wrote a divination statement: "Its origin."

Next, he held the Master Key in his hand so as not to misdirect the moniker "it."

Leaning back in his chair, Klein chanted the divination statement and gradually fell asleep.

In the gray haze of the shattered world, he saw a bronze lamp rack with many flickering candles.

Around the lamp rack was what seemed to be a secret room, devoid of any external light. There were long tables, black iron pots, glass jars, brown colored notebooks, and other items.

A young man wearing a classic black robe stood in front of the long table, staring at the potion in his hand.

"Ancestors, I am about to embark on the path of extraordinariness. I will definitely reproduce the illustrious glory of the Abraham family!" he mumbled to himself and drank the potion.

The muscles on his face contorted in pain.

Suddenly, he cried out miserably and fell to the ground. He squirmed continuously, strangling himself.

After a few seconds, he tore off his clothes, stripped off his skin, and turned into a monster covered in blood.

Boom!

His flesh exploded, and each piece of flesh seemed to possess a life of its own as they continued to crawl in every direction, leaving behind signs of corrosion.

In the end, they were unable to leave the secret chamber and gradually calmed down.

The specks of light gathered together and combined together with a broken finger, forming an ancient and simple-looking brass-colored key.

At the same time, Klein saw a silver pocket watch inlaid with diamonds among the tattered clothes.

After the dream ended, he opened his eyes and looked forward. He said with a sigh, "Seriously, he said he wanted to restore the glory of the Abraham family, but he failed at the first step… It's risky even at Sequence 9…”

The Abraham family was a powerful aristocratic family of the Tudor Dynasty during the Fourth Epoch. It was said that they held the Beyonder pathway of Apprentice, but it was very likely that it was incomplete.

Klein recalled the scene he had just seen. He tapped his fingers on the edge of the table and muttered to himself, "He spoke in the Loen language. I can't tell where his accent is from.

"It was during the last ten years since it became popular to embed pure diamonds into pocket watches.

"Perhaps I should visit the Harvest Church when I have the time and ask Father Utravsky where he got his Master Key from… Perhaps I can find some clues."

Just as Klein was about to leave the fog, the illusory star that symbolized The Magician began to swell and contract. Fors was requesting a sacrificial ritual.

Fors usually wouldn't have carried so much cash on her, but she had been planning to attend a Beyonder gathering, so she had left 500 pounds to see if she could buy what she wanted. Who knew that the corresponding gathering had been canceled because of the circumstances. Now, she could use it to pay for the Apothecary formula and the "acting method'—a total of 430 pounds.

Seeing the screen of light appear and seeing the paper money disappear, it took Fors a few seconds to react. She sincerely thanked Mr. Fool.

I shall sell the Apothecary formula to Viscount Glaint for 300 pounds. I can't be too greedy, or else this will ruin our long-term partnership… As for Miss Audrey, I'll ignore her for the time being. She has hopes of coming into contact with the Psychology Alchemists and obtaining the corresponding formula directly. If there's really no hope with that, I'll try purchasing it from the Tarot Gathering… Sigh… I have to see if the "acting method" is effective. If it is, then I have to consider how to pray to Mr. Fool. Oh… Xio is such a fool. She has always been acting as an Arbiter and had unknowingly fulfilled the requirements of the "acting method"…Fors began thinking of the future.

When he received the 430 pounds, Klein also received a prayer from Miss Justice. She said that if Mr. Fool's adorer no longer needed cash, she could promise to exchange the 200 pounds for Roselle's diary entries to make sure that Mr. Fool was satisfied.

I'm satisfied. I'm only a few dozen pounds short of a thousand pounds! Klein declined Miss Justice's offer.

Then, he busily helped The Sun "awaken" his memories regarding the seven gods.

After doing all this, Klein returned to the real world in exhaustion. He drew the curtains open and started going through the dossier with the information regarding the serial murders, searching for the animal that might have existed.

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CHAPTER 315
RETURN TO HARVEST CHURCH

City of Silver, in a cramped room.

Derrick Berg was sitting by his bedside, quietly recalling the information regarding the seven gods that he had received.

The names of the deities that he had never heard of and the vague ancient myths all indicated to him that there was a new world outside which was completely different from the City of Silver.

Is that a piece of land that hasn't been forsaken by the gods? Or perhaps, it's a land that is protected by new gods? Derrick sat in the dark, motionlessly. Lightning flashed from time to time outside the window, bringing with it intense light.

He slowly focused his thoughts on the different powers that were concentrated in the hands of the seven gods, and he compared them with the ancient gods such as the Dragon of Fantasy, Ankewelt.

The so-called God of Combat is very similar to Giant King Aurmir. The Lord of Storms wields power similar to the Pixie King, Soniathrym. The Evernight Goddess appears to be the fusion of the King of Demonic Wolves, Flegrea, and Vampire Ancestor, Lilith. As for the Eternal Blazing Sun, Mother Earth, God of Knowledge and Wisdom, and God of Steam and Machinery, I can't find anyone corresponding to them…

Regarding the mythical legends, I wasn't too attentive in class and missed out a lot…

Phew, since there's no patrol duty during this period of time, I should head to the spire's library and read up on them.

Derrick stood up and did as he planned.

The problem he faced was shared by the majority of the residents in the City of Silver. When they were being educated with general knowledge, their focus was all on the practical courses such as Devil Studies, Monster Classification, Charms, and Beyonder Foundations. They were all focused on the knowledge that could be used to deal with monsters in the dark and increase the production of edible plants. As for supplementary classes like Myth Studies, they often didn't pay much attention.

If the history regarding the City of Silver hadn't been able to make the residents more united, raise their sense of honor, or heighten their sense of mission, and how the six-member council was very strict in this regard, Derrick believed that he could at most remember what had happened in the last two or three decades.

Carrying the Axe of Hurricane, Derrick walked out of his house, following the clean, simple, but old and mottled stone road until he reached the twin towers on the north side of the city.

One of the spires of the twin towers served as the City of Silver's library, an exchange spot where merit points could be exchanged and daily necessities could be distributed. The dome was where the six-member council resided and was rumored to contain a mystical item which had sustained the City of Silver for more than two thousand years, as well as a repository for formulas and ingredients.

Entering the spire, Derrick went straight up to the third floor and, according to his recollections, found the shelves where materials regarding mythology and the corresponding ancient books were stored.

Just as he was about to take out a book related to the creation myth, a slender, fair-skinned, and good-looking palm rushed forward and took the book away from him.

Derrick traced the arm, and after a single glance, he lowered his head, pressed his hand to his chest, and said in a low voice, "Greetings, Elder Lovia."

The one who had taken the book from him was one of the members of the six-member council, Shepherd Lovia.

She wore a long black robe embroidered with mysterious purple patterns. Her silvery-gray hair was thick but curled up slightly.

Her face was smooth and fair, her appearance gorgeous. She looked to be in her early thirties, and her pair of light gray eyes seemed to be able to pierce through one's soul.

Lovia tersely acknowledged Derrick's greeting and gently nodded her head without saying anything else. She silently took the ancient book and left the space between the two bookshelves.

Elder Lovia seems to have returned to normal. She's not like before, always switching between different temperaments at random—sometimes crying, sometimes sneering, sometimes grunting angrily, sometimes indifferent… Such a thought subconsciously flashed across Derrick's mind.

Suddenly, he felt an inexplicable sense of fear.

It was because Elder Lovia was acting normally…

Normal…

…

After reading through the entire dossier, Klein found no record of any animals.

It was obvious that the original investigation had overlooked this problem.

*Yea, I have to remember my earlier considerations. I can't rashly perform my own investigations. Without talking about how I don't have the special means or confidence to avoid a Devil's intuition towards danger, just the possibility of me meeting a Nighthawk would be a very troublesome matter. My goal is to always take an auxiliary role. My job is to analyze the case and suggest conjectures and determine if a clue is authentic… *Klein considered what he needed to do.

After understanding the abilities of a Devil, he temporarily didn't dare to hand over the matter of investigating whether or not the previous suspects had pets to Stuart. That would have a high chance of injuring Stuart.

It's only in the preliminary stage of investigations without any direction. It's likely Stuart wouldn't encounter any problems. A Devil isn't like those bunch of lunatics from the Aurora Order. He wouldn't proactively expose himself. Tomorrow or the day after, Stuart will definitely hand in a report. Perhaps there might be clues that others might not be able to detect. Klein stood up and stuffed his hands into his pockets as he paced around the activity room.

Now, his dilemma was on how to get the main investigation body to include animals under their radar.

I definitely can't mention it directly, as that would attract the suspicion of others. It would be the same if I attempted to guide them in the dark… Klein thought carefully as he weighed the matter seriously before finally deciding on a plan.

He pulled out a letter, grabbed a fountain pen, and wrote:

"Dear Mr. Stanton,

"I thought of a problem. Previously, when the detectives were in discussion, they all found the murderer's actions skilled without any hint of inexperience. They believed that he couldn't be born with such skill and that he must've had a lot of experience to build up his foundation. Examples of such people can be surgical students from med school or a butcher.

"Back then, I thought he might have done something like this before. It's a direction for investigation, and it's what I'm paying the most attention to right now.

"But after thinking about it over and over again for the past two days, I don't think it's comprehensive enough. Perhaps, he didn't rely on killing people to gain experience.

"Is it possible that he practiced with poor animals? Different kinds of living animals.

"The number of animals that die in Backlund daily is innumerable, and those that disappear in the sewers are also unknown. Therefore, these are very good training targets.

"This is my inchoate opinion. I hope to communicate with you.

"Sherlock Moriarty"

Klein didn't directly mention that the murderer might have been an animal that had turned into a Devil. He also used the reason of practice, hoping that Isengard Stanton would take note of the neglected "animal world," thereby reminding the official Beyonders responsible for the case.

While he was writing, he suddenly felt that this was also a direction.

The reason why the Devil hadn't been caught all this time was because it had been hunting animals most of the time.

And the hunting of animals wasn't something worth paying attention to.

Well, let's hope it will inspire them… Klein folded the letter and dressed up to deliver it to the mailbox at the end of the street.

Fifteen minutes later, Lawyer Jurgen, who saw Detective Sherlock passing by his oriel window again and again, finally couldn't stop his urge to open his door and asked politely, "Mr. Moriarty, did you forget your key?"

"Uh, sort of." Klein squeezed out a smile.

"Why don't you come to my house as a guest? After dinner, you can go back after dark. I know that you private detectives are very good at climbing." Jurgen invited him in with a serious expression.

*Seriously? *Klein was stunned for a second before he smiled sincerely.

"It's my honor."

After all, Lawyer Jurgen's grandmother had the standard of a capable chef!

And he could also tease the cat while he was there!

…

When it was completely dark, Klein, having had his fill, rested for a while at home before leaving Minsk Street with his cane.

He planned to make another trip to Rose Street, on the south side of the bridge, and ask Bishop Utravsky about the origin of the Master Key.

With the help of Dowsing Rod Seeking, he successfully arrived at the Harvest Church in the dead of night and sneaked in through the same route as before.

However, Bishop Utravsky wasn't repenting in the cathedral's hall tonight. There were only rows of pews in the silence and gloom.

"He's resting?" Klein felt slightly puzzled as he walked towards the living area at the back of the hall.

As he rounded the corner, he saw the tall, giant-like Bishop Utravsky walking up the basement stairs. The heavy stone doors situated there were being banged on by someone.

Who did he detain in the basement? Klein instantly thought of a series of warped ideas.

Bishop Utravsky looked up and saw Klein disguised the same as before. He was also surprised as he asked, "Haven't you found your way home yet?"

…*Do I look like someone who's been lost for so long?* Klein forced a smile.

"Father, I'm not lost."

"You think that the formula is fake? That's impossible…" Bishop Utravsky frowned and stopped midway up the stairs.

As a result, he was at the same height as Klein.

"No, it's genuine," Klein answered honestly.

At this moment, the basement's stone door was thumped again with ever-increasing intensity. Along with the thumps was a male voice that shouted, "Let me out."

"This is?" Klein couldn't help but ask.

Bishop Utravsky smiled warmly and said, "A vampire."

As soon as he finished, the man in the basement shouted, "What's wrong with being a vampire? Do you think vampires should be locked up here? Do I have to listen to your nagging and scripture recitals every day? Bullshit, I'm a noble Sanguine, so don't use such a vulgar name to describe me!

"Let me tell you, I worship the moon, and I'll absolutely not convert to a believer of Mother Earth! Give up, you damned priest!"

It was Klein's first time meeting a real vampire, so he couldn't help but ask, "Father, where did you catch him?"

Bishop Utravsky gave Klein an odd look before saying, "He is the original owner of the Master Key.

"One day, he got lost and entered this cathedral."

…Klein seriously considered the dilemma of whether he should carry the Master Key with him in the future or not.

It's a good thing that I can divine… he thought thankfully.

"It just so happened that he had entered a state where he thirsted for blood, and I had discovered his abnormality," Bishop Utravsky added with a smile.

"Bullshit, don't talk about blood! What I need is the blood of a beautiful young girl, not the blood of a dirty old man like you!" The vampire in the basement suddenly became enraged.

Bishop Utravsky explained without a trace of anger, "When he craves blood, I will give him some of mine."

Klein nodded and looked again. He found that the heavy stone door in the basement was engraved with the Sacred Emblem of Life and many mysterious symbols, forming a complete seal.

During the day, when more and more people start praying, it would be impossible for the sound to even reach the outside… Klein made a preliminary judgment.

"Is there anything I can help you with?" at that moment, Bishop Utravsky asked.

Klein answered frankly, "I want to know where the Master Key first came from."

"You'll have to ask him." Bishop Utravsky pointed to the basement.

The vampire inside suddenly became quiet before he leisurely laughed and said, "Friend, I can answer your question.

"But the condition is that you rescue me first."

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CHAPTER 316
NEVER PERFORM UNPREPARED

He actually named his price… Upon hearing the vampire's request, Klein felt both irritated and amused.

He looked at the Bishop Utravsky, who was standing in front of him, and asked, "Father, may I borrow your candle? The one that you used last time. I've forgotten what it's called."

Before Bishop Utravsky could reply, the vampire in the basement spoke in a stunned voice.

"What do you want to do? What do you want to do?"

At this moment, Bishop Utravsky answered warmly, "It's called the Mental Terror Candle. What are you borrowing it for?"

Father, you're very cooperative. You even knew to ask… The corners of Klein's mouth curled up.

"I plan to use it to directly inquire the deepest part of this friend's heart.

"As you know, I'm quite talented in this area, and I'm very good at such matters…”

Before he could finish his sentence, the vampire in the basement had already shouted, "Bastard, give up on your idea!

"You will be cursed if you do this to a noble Sanguine!

"Hey, hey, hey! I'll speak! I'll speak! I'll tell you the origins of the Master Key!"

Klein immediately chuckled.

"Thank you for your cooperation."

"Hmph! The friend of that dirty old man naturally isn't a good person! As a Sanguine, all I did was go to the hospital to steal blood bottles to drink. Why did I end up locked up in here and forced to listen to this naggy, housefly-like Bible of Life!?" the vampire in the basement angrily complained.

*Frankly speaking, if you really are who you claim to be, and you bumped into me, at most, I would give you a warning. Unfortunately, you got lost and entered this cathedral. The priest you encountered used to kill people wantonly and enjoyed combat, but he's now pious and repentant. You can only blame your poor luck… However, with Bishop Utravsky's recovery, he's unlikely to hurt you. At most, he will keep you to his side… *Klein silently responded.

The vampire in the basement paused for a few seconds and said, "About a month ago, I went to the hospital in South Borough to steal blood and ended up meeting a thief.

"He originally wanted to enter the hospital's finance department, but he ended up lost. He opened the door to the blood bank and ended up being caught by me.

"He was using that Master Key. He told me that he had found it back when he had burgled a particular house. He had also obtained a pocket watch with inlaid diamonds. Uh, in the basement.

"At first, he thought that the key would correspond to a room or safe. He made several attempts and found that the key could open all doors. This is no doubt an unimaginable surprise for a thief. After that, he enjoyed numerous successes until I caught him and confiscated his key.

"Damn, I didn't expect that the key would make one get lost back then!"

It matches the scene I saw with my divination… However, is there a curse on the Master Key? The previous owner was detained because he got lost, and the owner before that was caught red-handed because he got lost… Perhaps I should really throw it into the space above the gray fog and take it out when I need it. But, that will be a lot more troublesome and might cause delays to certain matters… Klein controlled his expression and asked unhurriedly, "Did the thief say where he stole it?"

The vampire in the basement mumbled, "Are you doubting my intelligence? How could I not ask about this?

"He said it was in the area south of the bridge, 48 Riverbay Avenue. I was planning to check it out when… Damn it!

"Alright, I'm done answering. Don't disturb me anymore."

Klein didn't leave just because he received an answer. Instead, he slowly took out a halfpence copper coin and recited softly, "He's lying."

…

After repeating it seven times, Klein's eyes turned dark, and he flicked the coin up. He watched it spin in the air before it landed in the palm of his hand.

It was heads, indicating a positive response.

In other words, the vampire was lying!

The thief's description coincides greatly with what I had seen through divination, so they confirm each other… The vampire must've lied about the exact address! Klein looked at Bishop Utravsky and said with a chuckle, "He lied.

"Let me think about the reason why he lied.

"It would be very unwise of him to vent his anger and seek revenge on me, who is completely uninvolved. It would also be very detrimental to his situation.

"So, I think he's actually using this method to call for help. That address might very well belong to a companion of his. Father, do you plan on paying a visit?"

The basement suddenly fell silent. After a few seconds, the vampire laughed and said, "I just didn't want to tell you that easily. You threatened me just now, so I lied to take revenge on you. Isn't that normal?"

I can hear how forceful you are at trying to calm yourself down… Klein smiled and said, "Then, what's the real answer? If you continue lying, I don't mind sending this address to the three Churches. I'll just say that it has something to do with the recent serial murders."

"…Humans are really vicious…" The vampire sighed through gritted teeth. "The area south of the bridge, 32 Verdi Street."

Klein tossed the coin again and got the result that the vampire wasn't lying.

It seems like vampires don't have the ability to interfere with divination… Hmm, I should confirm it above the gray fog when I'm back… Klein pressed his hand to his chest, faced the heavy stone door, and bowed.

"Thank you for your cooperation."

"Hmph," the vampire in the basement snappily replied.

As Klein turned to leave, the vampire suddenly shouted, "Remember that my name is Emlyn White. Remember, my name is Emlyn White!"

Why do I have to remember your name? It's not like I'm going to save you. Without preparation, and without a home ground advantage, I'm no match for Father Utravsky, and he has the mystical item to transfuse blood… Hmm, could it be that this vampire's companion will offer a bounty, and he wishes for me to sell this information? Klein was surprised for a moment before he walked out of the Harvest Church without a word.

After finding a secluded place, he undid the spirit pendulum wound around his left wrist and started to divine if he should visit 32 Verdi Street at that very moment.

The answer he got was that there was some danger, but it wasn't too high.

There is certain danger… Where's the danger? What kind of danger would it be? Klein carefully analyzed the situation, suspecting that the Apprentice who died from losing control had turned into a ghost-type monster due to its intense grievance. Furthermore, it was a relatively strong one at that.

That's not right. That thief clearly came out with the Master Key without encountering any trouble. Could it be that the danger is in another secret location in the house? Klein thought for a moment and decided that it would be best for him to go only when he was sufficiently prepared. It prevented him from entering a situation in which he encountered an enemy whom he was unable to deal with, with his present Beyonder powers.

At the very least, I'll have to wait until I buy bullets that can purify wraith shadows… He nodded slightly.

After this consideration, combined with his previous battle with Dawn Paladin Bishop Utravsky, Klein suddenly felt that he could vaguely conclude the first rule of a Magician: "Never perform unprepared!"

Doing otherwise would result in a high chance of messing up… Klein added silently.

…

On Tuesday morning, after preparing butter and toasting two slices of bread, Klein was in no hurry to eat. He opened the door and retrieved the day's newspaper from the mailbox.

Eh, there's a letter… He pulled the letter out from the newspaper and glanced at the envelope as he returned to the dining room.

It's from Stuart… It appears that he has already completed his preliminary investigations. Klein nodded slightly, tore open the envelope, shook the piece of paper, and sat down at the dining table as he read it.

Stuart claimed that the two suspects had shown no signs of abnormal behavior. One of them entrenched himself at the grocery store and guarded his wife and children, living a lifeless life, while the other was busy with various temporary jobs and working hard to maintain his life. They were not irritable, nor did they have the urge to fight. They also didn't lock themselves up in a room.

At the end of the letter, Stuart lamented the harsh situation in East Borough and vowed to save enough money to avoid being reduced to staying there when he was old.

"Thank you for your help. I will share my findings with the rest of you if there are any other clues," Klein replied to the letter simply when he saw how Stuart had no signs of being discovered. He didn't want Stuart to delve deeper into the case, or else the Devil might detect the danger and kill any latent dangers in advance.

Putting away his pen and paper, Klein picked up a piece of bread that had already been soaked in butter and leisurely spent his breakfast with a cup of black tea and the newspaper.

During this process, he felt rather regretful that there were no signs that the Beyonder gathering organized by Old Mister Eye of Wisdom would be held.

Sigh, the existence of this Devil has seriously affected the lives of the Backlund Beyonders. I hope Mr. Isengard Stanton is able to notice my hint and be fruitful. Yes, he should be a "recognized" Beyonder by the officials… Klein put down the newspaper and picked up a napkin to wipe his mouth before he packed up to leave.

His plan today had been already decided last week.

He was to visit the Royal Museum for the Emperor Roselle Memorial Exhibition!

…

In Empress Borough, the opulent villa of Count Hall.

Audrey was wearing a light lace dress and donned snow-white fur as she waited for her personal maidservant, Anne, to help her put on a soft hat with pearls and a thin fishnet veil.

Beside her, Susie sat there with a bow tied around her neck.

"My beautiful little princess, where do you plan on going?" Count Hall asked, stroking his fine mustache as he descended the stairs.

Audrey's eyes replied with bright eyes, "Father, I plan to attend the Roselle Memorial Exhibition."

I can take a look at the original diary of Emperor Roselle and find a chance to get some for Mr. Fool… she added in her mind.

Count Hall muttered to himself, "Why are you going today? There will be a lot of people, and the scene will be very chaotic.

"Yes, I'll get someone to coordinate with the Church of the God of Steam and Machinery. After the official exhibition is over, they'll open its doors specially for you and your friends for half a day. That way, you can have a quiet and undisturbed tour.

"If you have anything you wish to look at closely, you can discuss it with them directly."

In that the case, that seems even better. I can directly look through the diaries in this exhibition… Audrey lifted her skirt and curtsied.

"Thank you, handsome Count Hall~"

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CHAPTER 317
ROSELLE MEMORIAL EXHIBITION

West Borough, 2 King's Avenue, Royal Museum.

Although it wasn't a weekend, there was a long line at the door when Klein arrived.

According to the descriptions in the newspapers and magazines, he knew that the world's middle class had fewer ways of entertaining themselves. Other than reading newspapers, reading novels, listening to opera concerts, playing tennis and squash, enjoying plays, and holding or attending banquets, there were only three options: going to a park, going to an exhibition, and going on vacation. Due to Emperor Roselle's influence, annual vacations were already common phenomena.

At nine o'clock sharp, Klein, who was wearing a silk top hat, a black cane, and a long double-breasted frock coat, followed the people in front of him and entered the museum.

There was a split here, and the different guides led a number of visitors down different passages.

Klein and nearly twenty people followed a good-looking woman and listened to her introduction of Roselle's life.

This was of zero value to Klein, who was half a historian, so he was so bored that he began confirming the location of his wallet.

Since his wealth had soared to 952 pounds, just a step away from a thousand pounds, his wallet could no longer hold so much cash, and he could only carry some of it selectively. As for the rest, Klein didn't feel at ease to just leave them at home without protection, so he threw them all above the gray fog.

As they walked, they entered the first exhibition hall. The female guide excitedly said, "Ladies and gentlemen, these are the daily necessities of Emperor Roselle.

"Look, that's his velvet quilt, and that's the golden glassware he used to drink his wine.

"That's the toilet he used, the first toilet in the modern sense."

…

Even a toilet he had used before is being exhibited? Klein suddenly felt some sympathy for Roselle.

Then, he looked at the toilet with a flushing system behind the glass wall and saw that it was shimmering with golden light. It seemed to have a layer of gold foil on its surface, and it was engraved with an exaggerated and artistic pattern.

How extravagant.… Klein no longer sympathized with Roselle.

Separated from the toilet by only a glass layer was Roselle's everyday clothing, including cuffs, a shirt with pleats at the collar, and so on.

It was obvious that the female guide was rather impressed by Intis's dress culture.

After the Daily Necessities Exhibition Hall, there was a display of the original versions of the important documents which Roselle had issued, including the Civil Code and other extremely valuable historical relics.

At that moment, the female guide pointed at a display cabinet and said, "This is one of the diaries left behind by Emperor Roselle. It uses his self-created mysterious symbols that have yet to be deciphered to date. Many historians and archaeologists believe that these notes contain the least known secrets of Emperor Roselle.

"As a romantic, I have my own guesses. Perhaps these are the symbols he had agreed upon with his most beloved woman. They wrote about each other, but were never able to truly be together."

You're suited for writing novels… The corner of Klein's mouth twitched. His eyes then turned to the notebook that was spread open in the display cabinet. On it were the simplified Chinese he was extremely familiar with.

"6th March. Dammit, I'm almost constipated from eating the food here!"

"17th March. Are the ladies of Intis so open? Did I hit on her, or did she hit on me? I just find it odd."

"22nd March. It's time to choose a religion. On one side is the Church of the Eternal Blazing Sun, and on the other is the Church of Craftsmanship.

"My choice is without a doubt. Praise you, God of All Machinery!

"One day, I will make the Church of Craftsmanship change its name to the Church of Machinery."

…It's indeed very romantic… Romantic constipation… This should be a diary entry written by Emperor Roselle in his early days. It's without any valuable information… His handwriting is even uglier than mine… Klein looked away and tsked.

Of course, he only saw the two pages that were spread open. He didn't know what else was on it.

I wonder how the security measures here are. I wonder if there is a chance of sneaking in and flipping through them… Klein looked around and saw that there were quite a few security personnel on the surface.

Perhaps there are Beyonders from the Church of the God of Steam and Machinery… he muttered under his breath and followed the female guide as he blended in with the crowd. He entered the next exhibition hall which was called "The Gentle Roselle."

"This is Emperor Roselle's first love letter. This is his first love poem he created—"When You Are Old 1." The female guide looked at the manuscript in the display cabinet with glimmering eyes.

Shameless! Yeats's coffin can't be held shut any longer! Klein couldn't help but lampoon.

"This is a bracelet he made. This is the original manuscript of his novel…" The female guide introduced with a tone of extraordinary adoration.

…Klein tried hard not to let his expression change.

Of course, he also believed that Emperor Roselle, who was an Artisan in his Beyonder profession, was definitely very skilled in his craftsmanship.

"This is the basic education textbook that he improved to educate his children. Each word has its own corresponding picture… It was a little game he had invented for his children, similar to Intis chess, but somehow it didn't become popular… These are the toy blocks he invented; these were also for his children…" the female guide said in a gentle tone without even realizing it.

*Isn't this fucking Chinese Chess… Furthermore, Lego wants to collect the licensing fees from you! *Klein could only smirk to hide his other emotions.

With a single glance, he noticed that there was a woman over 1.7 meters tall standing in front of this display cabinet.

The lady had chestnut hair that fell to her waist, and she had a perfectly proportioned figure. She was neither fat nor thin.

She wore a lace dress which had the vibes of a young girl, but she wore a black, out-of-fashion bonnet, and a fishnet veil hung down, concealing her face.

She stood in front of the display cabinet and stared at the items inside for a long time without leaving.

Even when Klein and the others followed the guide to the next exhibition hall, she remained rooted to the spot.

After passing through a few more exhibition halls, the female guide pointed ahead and said, "The next thing you will see is Emperor Roselle's restored study.

"Of course, it's only a part of it."

As she spoke, Klein and the others entered the exhibition hall as the area before them opened up.

It was almost like a library, lined with shelves which were two stories high. There were ladders sitting beneath them and aisles between them leading to a three-dimensional book park.

"You can imagine how the owner of this place had once climbed up and down the ladder in search of the book that he wanted to read…" The guide painted a vivid picture.

*No, Roselle would definitely send his servants to seek it out for him. He wouldn't do it himself… *Klein silently refuted.

In the center of the row of bookshelves were desks, chairs, brass lampstands, and the like. They were all protected under the cover of glass and were blocked from making contact with the outside world.

With a single glance, Klein found a stack of manuscripts which were all yellow in color.

The stack of manuscripts weren't spread out, so one could only see the contents of the first page.

It was a drawing of a rectangular object with a detailed description: "This is a portable, miniaturized application of the telegraph. Through it, one can connect to the person holding the same item and receive and exchange information. You can even converse with them directly.

"This requires better positioning. I think we can boldly cast our sights to the sky. There are no obstructions in the sky, and it would allow for better transmission of signals."

…

*Emperor, you aren't even letting go of a cell phone… *Klein couldn't help but facepalm.

At that moment, the guide introduced the stack of manuscripts.

“…These record the wonderful ideas of Emperor Roselle. They record inventions which he was unable to turn into reality in time. They record the glory of what our human civilization is capable of!"

Klein didn't pay any attention to the flattery and instead casually sized up the other things.

Suddenly, he noticed a bookmark in a hardcover book on the desk.

The exposed part of the bookmark depicted a drawing which was randomly drawn by a child.

Emperor Roselle isn't good at drawing… Just as Klein was mocking inwardly, he suddenly thought of something—Roselle had once disguised a Card of Blasphemy as a bookmark and placed it inside a certain book!

Could it be this one? Klein carefully observed for a few seconds, but he didn't find anything amiss.

That's right. He had mentioned before that the Cards of Blasphemy possess anti-divination and anti-prophecy characteristics. Under normal circumstances, there's no way to discover their uniqueness… If it were so easily recognized, the Church of the God of Steam and Machinery would have long taken it away… Klein cast his gaze away and began scrutinizing the other books. He discovered that many of them had a bookmark in them, and all of these bookmarks were of different shapes.

He pondered for a moment, and using his Clown's ability to control his facial muscles, he curiously asked, "Are these all books that Emperor Roselle has read before?

"Sorry, I mean, are these the original books?"

The female guided nodded firmly.

"Yes, these are all the items from Emperor Roselle's study from back then. They include, but are not limited to, books, manuscripts, bookmarks, lampstands, ink bottles… But even more were destroyed during the several conflicts."

Klein nodded slightly and studied the bookmarks again.

Roselle had said in his diary that he was going to put the Card of Blasphemy in a very valuable book so that no one would ever think that the most valuable thing in that book was actually an obscure bookmark… Well,

which of these books are valuable? Klein began eliminating books as he recalled the details written in the diary.

"Glorious Era," doesn't look like it…

"The History of the Intis Kingdom," doesn't look like it…

*"Geography of the Northern Continent," this might be possible, but it isn't very likely… *

"The Improved Principles of Steam Machinery," just like before…

Klein scanned the books, one by one, when his eyes suddenly came to rest on the first pile of manuscripts he saw.

They were recording objects from Earth objects which Roselle had wanted to invent but lacked the conditions to do so.

There was also a bookmark in it, and on it, there was a depiction of Roselle in royal Emperor clothes.

Footnotes:

Ch 317 Footnote 1

Poem by William Butler Yeats.

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CHAPTER 318
VERIFICATION

His manuscripts of plagiarism. No, his manuscript of creativity should be considered a very valuable book… Could that bookmark be a Card of Blasphemy? Klein's heart skipped a beat, lightly tapped his molars, and quietly activated his Spirit Vision.

However, he didn't find anything abnormal.

He then scanned the other bookmarks and obtained the same answer.

That's right, if it's that easy to detect it, it wouldn't have remained till this day for me to have this thought… Klein deactivated his Spirit Vision, and once again, he thought via method of elimination, based on the details he had learned from Roselle's diary and the personality the Emperor had shown.

As far as he could tell, since Roselle had said that the book with the Card of Blasphemy was valuable, it couldn't be too ordinary, or it wouldn't satisfy his sense of warped humor—to use lots of valuable knowledge to serve as a foil for an unobtrusive bookmark would be a form of teasing the recipient of the book.

Thus, books with value but aren't of great value can be ignored. In that case… Klein looked around, trying to make sense of it, completely turning a deaf ear to what the guide was saying.

*In summary, in the entire study, the only book that fulfills these conditions is that manuscript of creativity. The others are only ordinary in value. With Roselle's personality, he definitely wouldn't choose them. Yes, Roselle is the

kind of person who would claim 'I'll hide the secret in the most obvious place, but none of you can find it"…*As Klein imagined this, he added a cackling expression to the Emperor in his mind.

Of course, there's no way he could confirm that the bookmark was the disguised Card of Blasphemy because the books Roselle had, which were of great value, clearly included those in the field of mysticism. And those books were definitely not going to be put on display by the Church of the God of Steam and Machinery!

Yes, I have to first confirm if it's the Card of Blasphemy before considering if I should take action… Unfortunately, I can't use the date 20th January as a method of elimination. No one knows which bookmark is placed into which book on and on which day… Klein silently muttered to himself and turned to look towards the guide. He asked with a smile, "Do the books on the shelf also have things stuffed in between them?

"For example, a note written by some noble lady to Roselle."

This question made many men give a knowing chuckle. The female guide shook her head and said, "No, there aren't any. The books that contain other items have all been taken out and placed here for everyone to see.

"This is just a restoration of Emperor Roselle's study, not the restoration of a particular point in time. There is no need to maintain an immutable state."

Klein laughed and said immediately, "I understand, this sure is disappointing…"

That's simply great! There's only one bookmark in the entire exhibition hall that requires verification. The difficulty has greatly fallen… he added happily in his heart.

As the guide introduced "Roselle's Favorite Books," Klein looked around the room again, taking in the overall layout.

To restore the room from more than a century ago, there were no gas lamps around the room.

The lighting mainly relied on the iron-barred oriel windows that were a few meters away and the huge crystal chandeliers hanging from the ceiling.

As for the brass lamp on the desk, there were no candles installed. It was purely a decoration.

Looking out the oriel window, Klein saw the yellow, withered lawn and a straight, iron-black lamppost.

He took note of the location and turned his attention back to the book the female guide was introducing. In his mind, he began to analyze the feasibility of the theft.

There's one premise. According to Roselle's intentions, the various Churches and the ancient royal families wouldn't wish for him to spread the Cards of Blasphemy and destroy the stable order that has been in place for more than a thousand years.

Therefore, if I'm an archbishop in charge of handling this matter, I will directly burn all of Roselle's items. If the Cards of Blasphemy can be destroyed so completely, the outcome will perfectly suit the thoughts of the deities. If the Cards of Blasphemy are difficult to be destroyed, they will definitely expose their abnormality after the burning.

Since Roselle's items still remain, that means that he used certain methods to make everyone, including the deities, believe that he had sent out all the Cards of Blasphemy without keeping a single one.

Of course, I can't eliminate the possibility that some Churches or ancient families might attempt to use the Cards of Blasphemy to make up for their incomplete Beyonder pathways. But this possibility is very tiny. This is because it will give Roselle an opportunity to come up with a united front

strategy. There wouldn't be a need for him to go so far as to destroy the order by spreading the Cards of Blasphemy.

In that case, his diary will show a certain level of confidence and corresponding concern, and he definitely wouldn't be left with pessimism to the point of only thinking of relying on that ancient secret organization.

Furthermore, it's been more than a hundred years. The Church of the God of Steam and Machinery, who has retained these remains, must've made numerous supplementary searches. Therefore, no one would believe that the Church of the God of Steam and Machinery remain hidden in here.

In other words, the security level of this exhibition wouldn't be too high.

Besides, the most important point is that Backlund is currently under siege by the terror caused by the Devil's serial murders. The Beyonders of the three Churches must be sweeping through the entire city. The amount of manpower that the Machinery Hivemind Squad can afford to place at this unimportant exhibition would be extremely limited.

Yes, the thing most worthy of protection here is Roselle's diary. Many wild Beyonders worship the Emperor greatly. They believe that the book written with independently-created symbols must contain more profound mysteries. There's a motive to stealing them, and they have the ability to do so. Therefore, the guards' focus will definitely be in that exhibition hall.

I'll do a divination above the gray fog when I'm back to verify my analysis.

*However, I have to first test if it's a Card of Blasphemy. Otherwise, I would be taking a certain risk and wasting tremendous effort only to steal an ordinary bookmark. If that happened, I might as well lie back in my grave! Yes, how should I verify it? It can't wait till I infiltrate again, and I don't have an opportunity to do so now… I have to find someone to help… I have to be careful! *Klein's followed behind the guide with a focused expression as though he was very attentive.

Miss Magician is an Apprentice. She is able to go through walls and doors. It's like she possesses a Master Key, so she's a good candidate… However, she's only Sequence 9. The mission of infiltrating to do the verification is way too dangerous for her…

Miss Xio? No, she wouldn't be up to this… Let her get a thief to help? No, that's won't do. There are Beyonder guards here. The thief would most likely get caught on the spot, which will expose the fact that someone is looking into Roselle's bookmark…

Miss Sharron? She's powerful enough, and her state is suitable for this kind of quest, but the problem is that the Card of Blasphemy is a divine object that can make most Beyonders willing to kill. I still don't trust her enough…

…

Klein thought, analyzing the helpers he could use.

Gradually, he had a candidate in mind: Miss Justice!

*Is it possible for her to use her wealth and power as a noble to touch the bookmark, using her interest as an excuse? Hmm, there are plenty of opportunities. Furthermore, this method won't alarm anyone. It would be beneficial for me to sneak in and steal it in the future… *The more Klein thought about it, the more he found it feasible.

As for the question of how to verify it, as the Card of Blasphemy possessed anti-divination and anti-prophecy characteristics, the only solution he could think of for the time being was—to attempt to destroy the bookmark!

Doesn't anti-divination and anti-prophecy mean that using a similar method on a particular object that hides a Card of Blasphemy would result in failure or interference? Wouldn't that be tantamount to exposing itself?

What it really means is that even with the Card of Blasphemy, divining it will be equivalent to divining an ordinary object. The divination would

result in something equivalent to the ordinary object.

In any case, I can't figure out what "password" the Emperor set. I can only use such a simple and crude method to confirm it. If the Card of Blasphemy can really be destroyed, then it only means that I'm temporarily unfated with it… Yes, with the Emperor's liking, perhaps I can try an activation incantation…

He once joked in his diary, saying, "My fortune is yours for the taking, but you'll have to find it first. I left everything I own at the ends of the Fog Sea," and the Card of Blasphemy is one of those treasures!

The activation incantation could be set to "One Piece" in ancient Hermes? That's not right. That way, there would be no one who can obtain anything, unless a second transmigrator appears. This isn't in accordance with the Emperor's intention to create chaos and destroy order, so the corresponding word for "Pirate King" was in either Hermes or ancient Hermes?

Klein slowly confirmed his thoughts, paying more and more attention to the layout of the exhibition hall.

Under the guidance of the female guide, they left the restored study and entered another exhibition hall.

When everything was over, and he was free to move around, Klein said, a little embarrassed, "Excuse me, but I would like to know where the washroom is? Upstairs?"

"No, that's where our office is. If you follow this path until the end before turning left, you will see it." The female guide politely pointed in a direction.

Using this opportunity, Klein figured out the connections of the washroom and several large exhibition halls, and he sketched out a rough layout in his mind.

At noon, he left the Royal Museum without doing anything and returned to 15 Minsk Street.

Klein had originally wanted to instruct Miss Justice as The Fool, saying that his adorer needed help. But on second thought, he felt that it would ruin the image of Mr. Fool.

*As an unfathomable figure, he has to appear calm and collected. He can't always be helping his adorer. At the very least, he can't be personally bringing up such matters, time and time again… *Klein thought for a moment and quickly worked out a solution.

He decided to pass on the image and voice of his "adorer's" plea directly to Miss Justice.

In the process, Mr. Fool didn't say anything!

Phew. Klein exhaled, drew the curtains, rubbed his cheeks, and began to pray to himself, "The Fool that doesn't belong to this era.

"The mysterious ruler above the gray fog.

"The King of Yellow and Black who wields good luck.

"I pray for your help.

"I hope that someone can help me touch the bookmark in Roselle's manuscript of creativity.

"Help me inflict small and unnoticeable damage to it and tell me of its results. While doing so, one can recite the corresponding term for 'Pirate King' in Hermes or ancient Hermes.

"No matter who helps me, even if there isn't a reaction, I will be willing to pay them 500 pounds. This can be deducted from the 5,000 pounds that has not yet been paid.

"If there is a reaction, I am willing to give more."

…

After doing all of this, Klein waited for a moment before entering the gray fog, and he saw the scene of his prayer displayed on the screen of light.

After divining that "the theft of the bookmark in the Royal Museum" involved a certain amount of danger but wasn't too high, he extracted the plea, and added more of a "mosaic" effect to it. He also distorted his voice slightly, and he threw it into the illusory star that symbolized Miss Justice.

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CHAPTER 319
AUDREY'S “ADVENTURE”

In Empress Borough, the opulent villa of Count Hall.

Audrey was supposed to be practicing her piano at this time, but she remained seated in front of her dressing table, thinking about how to read and memorize Roselle's diary in the evening.

Suddenly, her surroundings became hazy, and a boundless grayish-white began to emanate.

In the middle of the gray fog, The Fool's figure sat high above. He was listening to a man who was barely visible pray, “…I pray for your help.

"I hope that someone can help me touch the bookmark in Roselle's manuscript of creativity."

…

How does Mr. Fool know that I'll be visiting the Roselle Memorial Exhibition this evening after the museum is closed, and that I'll have the opportunity of touching some items… Audrey listened in a daze. Although she was amazed, she didn't find it odd.

With Mr. Fool's stature and abilities, being aware of such a trivial matter is very easy!

As for how he learned of it, there was no need for ordinary Beyonders to attempt to comprehend it.

Audrey was about to reply when The Fool spoke in a low, flat voice, "You can choose to accept this request or not."

Hmm… Audrey pondered for two seconds and said, "Respected Mr. Fool, I can try, but I can't guarantee success."

She wasn't really interested in the minimum reward of 500 pounds. The reason why she had accepted the mission was that she was curious about the special nature of the bookmark left behind by Emperor Roselle, which was so important to the adorer of Mr. Fool that he offered an uncapped price.

Anyway, I was going to look through Roselle's diary today, so it's convenient… Audrey thought.

Amidst the fog, The Fool nodded slightly and replied with a single word, "Okay."

When the illusion was completely gone, Audrey turned her gaze to the dressing mirror and seemed to examine herself closely.

Feeling both nervous and excited, she began to make plans for the evening operation.

I cannot let them notice anything unusual.

Even if Mr. Fool's adorer does take any action later, I cannot become a suspect.

It's definitely not okay to only touch that bookmark. The moment it's lost, all eyes will be focused on me.

Yes… So, I need to show equal interest in all the other objects. I cannot let others notice that my main goal is that bookmark. The entire process has to be fluid, nothing sudden, and it has to be reasonable and logical.

How should I cause inconspicuous damage?

It's just a bookmark…

Audrey's eyes swept across the items on her dressing table without focus. Suddenly, her gaze fell on an open jewelry box and focused on a pair of gemstone earrings adorned with fine needles.

The corners of her lips curled up, bit by bit, as her eyebrows and eyes slightly curved as she muttered to herself, "With Susie's help, it should be enough…”

…

It was six o'clock in the evening. Backlund, that hardly ever saw the sun during the current season, was already dark, and the gas lamps were lit up.

After the Royal Museum sent off the last batch of ordinary visitors, it received a group of visitors composed of the young lady from a count family, the child of a duke, and a young viscount.

As the Machinery Hivemind knew that some of the aristocratic children were foppish people who frequently caused trouble, the Captain of the Machinery Hivemind's West Borough squad, Max Livermore, was responsible for guarding the memorial. He had no choice but to disguise himself as a security guard and stay close by to prevent any accidents.

His hair was neatly combed as he wore a monocle, making his scholarly appearance akin to a college professor.

The monocle was actually a Sealed Artifact, codenamed 3-1328, named Eye of Crystal. With it, Max Livermore could see the spiritual body directly, as well as ghosts and shadows. There was no need to fear Beyonders who used these usually difficult to detect entities to cause chaos or engage in theft.

Of course, this Sealed Artifact also had a significant disadvantage. It could easily attract monsters like wraiths and shadows to the vicinity. If it was worn for a long time, one's vision would suffer irreversible damage.

In the gloom of Backlund, she's like the bright sun… At that moment, Max was looking admiringly at the blonde girl with blue eyes to his side.

Audrey looked with great interest at the toilet which was gold-plated and engraved with intricate patterns. She asked the guide beside her, "Is this the first toilet in the modern sense?"

"Yes, I personally believe that this is one of Roselle's most outstanding contributions to human civilization. The sewer works that go with it have changed the phenomenon of filth being all over the streets of Trier." The guide originally wanted to say the word "feces," but after looking at the girl in front of him, he felt that he couldn't lose his elegance.

Audrey hesitated and asked, "Can I touch it?"

"Can it still be used normally?" Viscount Glaint asked with a laugh from the side.

"Why are you so curious about this? No matter how old it is, it's ultimately still a toilet."

The other aristocratic children who were on good terms with them all laughed.

"No, Glaint, you don't understand. This is the glory of human civilization." Audrey smiled faintly in response but barfed inwardly.

If it wasn't to fulfill the request of Mr. Fool's adorer, I wouldn't want to do this either… She sighed helplessly.

The guide chimed in, "What Miss Hall said is very right. The glory of human civilization isn't only reflected in firearms and other weapons that have changed the form of war, but they also shine in every detail of our lives.

"My lady, I don't know if it can still be used properly, because no one will use it."

The guide glanced at Max Livermore and, after receiving a nod of confirmation, continued, "You can touch it, and you may even open the water tank to take a look at the mechanical structure inside. But please be careful."

"Thank you." Audrey watched as the security guard opened the glass wall. She hurriedly took two steps forward, reached out her right hand, which was covered in white fishnet gloves, and carefully touched the flush button.

Then, she slowly stepped back and said with a smile, "Alright, let's keep it at that. I've satisfied my curiosity. I can't hurt it any further."

She constantly reminded herself that her prescribed character was that of a naive and curious young girl.

After reading this, they entered the exhibition hall where Roselle's diary was located.

After some introduction, Audrey asked again, "Can I look through this notebook? We are all interested in these strange symbols.

"Eh… I heard that paper would suffer damage by mere contact with air after a certain period of time, let alone having them touched. It shouldn't be possible, right?"

She blinked, making her beautiful gem-like eyes express sincerity and desire, together with a little disappointment.

The guide looked at Max Livermore again and waited for his reply before smiling.

"The Church used a special storage method to make the paper look the same as if it was produced only a few years ago. Furthermore, even without

this method, we will try our best to fulfill your requests. However, we may need to change environments, change our clothes, and go through a stricter process.

"You can flip it, but not for too long. Don't use too much strength."

Audrey's eyes lit up all of a sudden, making it hard for anyone to shift their gaze away.

After sincerely thanking the guide, she, Viscount Glaint, and the other mysticism enthusiasts had the glass cover removed as they carefully flipped through the notebook.

Audrey tried her best to memorize, but due to the complexity of the symbols, her ability to remember them in this short period of time was rather limited.

*That should be around two pages of content. I wonder if there's any way to make a copy of it… *Her thoughts wandered as she gave her spot to her peers.

In this way, she made a request for a closer look at something in each of the exhibition halls, which was mostly met.

After a while, they arrived at the restored study.

Audrey kept to her previous behavior and would ask a few questions from time to time, fully displaying her curiosity.

When the guide introduced the manuscript of creativity, her eyes lit up and she said, "Can I flip through it? I wish to see what the manuscript of the great inventor, Roselle, looks like. I also want to know what wonderful ideas it contains."

"No problem, beautiful Miss Hall, honorable Viscount Glaint, you can all have a look through it. Heh, if any of you are a devout believer of the

Church, you can even apply for a copy," the guide replied, according to Max's gesture.

As a believer of the Goddess, Audrey could only respond with a faint smile. It wasn't convenient for her to make a comment.

At the same time, she pretended to lift her hair and touched her right ear with her palm, quietly removing her earring.

Immediately, when the glass case that encased the desk was opened, Audrey stepped forward and, holding down the manuscript, casually pulled out the bookmark, before casually flipping a page.

At this moment, Susie, who had received her hint, suddenly barked in a particular direction.

Woof! Woof! Woof!

The crowd's attention was immediately attracted in that direction. Audrey lowered her arm and used the earring in her palm to stab at the bookmark she was holding. While doing so, she chanted the phrase "Pirate King" in her mind, using Hermes before switching to ancient Hermes.

When the sharp, needle-like accessory touched the surface of the bookmark, Audrey suddenly felt an intense and illusory resistance just as it was about to penetrate the bookmark.

An unusual resistance!

The resistance disappeared in a flash. The "fine needle" punctured a tiny hole and nearly pierced through.

There really is a reaction! There's really something strange about it! The light in Audrey's eyes glinted. Without daring to try again, she lifted her hand and placed the bookmark on the desk.

Then, she looked at Susie and calmly told her maidservant, Annie, "Eh… take her to the bathroom."

"Yes, milady." Annie hurriedly led Susie out of the room.

Ting!

Taking this opportunity, Audrey threw the earring in her hand onto the ground, then she tilted her head and said, "I'm sorry, I dropped my earring."

Another maid hurried over, picked up the earring, and helped her put it on.

The interlude went by in a flash, and everyone's attention returned to the manuscript. After they were pretty much done with it, they saw the "security guard," Max Livermore, quickly tuck the bookmark in and closed the glass cover again.

Audrey's interest remained as strong as before in the next few exhibition halls. Just like before, she didn't show any abnormalities.

It was only when she left the museum and returned home did she find a chance to recite the honorific name of The Fool and report the results:

“…I did what your adorer requested, and I damaged that bookmark a little.

"It-it had an abnormal reaction."

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CHAPTER 320
ACTION

An abnormal reaction? From the looks of it, it really is a Card of Blasphemy! Above the gray fog, Klein, who received the reply, was delighted at first, but he then exclaimed in surprise.

Isn't Miss Justice way too efficient?

I only entrusted the mission to her this afternoon, and she has already completed the verification by the evening…

Furthermore, this is obviously past the closing time of the Royal Museum!

A Telepathist also definitely lacks infiltration abilities!

Hmm, her family's influence is probably even greater than I expected…

Thankfully, the verification didn't produce any strange phenomena; otherwise, the only thing that can be done is to allow Miss Justice to act innocent and hand the card over to the higher authorities. And this also means that I'm not fated to have this treasure… There's nothing in this world with a hundred percent certainty…

Amidst his thoughts, Klein heard Miss Justice's subsequent question.

"Mr. Fool, exactly what secret lies in that bookmark?

"Well, if your adorer is unwilling to give you the answer, just pretend that I didn't ask."

Of course, the secret is that it hides a Card of Blasphemy inside! Klein was overjoyed as he silently sighed.

After thinking it over carefully, he decided to wait until he obtained the Card of Blasphemy before replying to Miss Justice; otherwise, she might appear too shocked and act strangely, causing his own actions to be negatively affected.

Klein was in no hurry to return to the real world. He just sat there in the silent, empty old palace, thinking about when to act and how to do it.

*Miss Justice has done some damage to that bookmark, so I wonder if someone would later discover the damage… Otherwise, would the bookmark slowly show signs of abnormality and attract attention… Thus, I cannot afford to delay or wait. It would be best if I take action tonight! *As all sorts of ideas churned through his mind, Klein gradually came to a decision.

Then, on the basis of his morning observations, he conjured the layout of the Royal Museum's first floor and the general conditions surrounding it.

Looking at this blueprint, Klein began going through different plans and quickly established a relatively safe plan.

Finally, he made another divination to confirm the degree of danger.

After seeing that nothing had changed, he returned to the real world and began making all sorts of preparations.

What Klein originally wanted to do was to "draw" the pattern in his memory, forge a similar bookmark, and replace it after he had sneaked in via responding to himself. He wanted to ensure that no one noticed or know for a long time that the bookmark had been stolen. By the time it was discovered, it would be too late for others to trace the incident back to him.

However, after much deliberation, he felt that this wasn't good. As long as the fake bookmark was discovered, the most suspicious person would be Miss Justice who touched the original bookmark today.

*I can't put Miss Justice at risk for the sake of a treasure. She did this to help me! *Klein finally figured out how to keep Miss Justice from being suspected.

His plan was to not only steal the bookmark but to also steal the surrounding items as well, including some of the lighter books!

*Phew… *After finishing his preparations, Klein took out his gold pocket watch and opened it. He patiently waited until after nine. He wanted to act before midnight.

If he were too early, people living around there wouldn't have started sleeping. That wouldn't satisfy his requirement for taking action. If he were too late, there would be almost no pedestrians on the streets. Just walking along the streets would make him be easily suspected, and during this period of time, the whole of Backlund was under tight curfews due to serial murders.

This was beneficial to Klein's operation, but it was also disadvantageous!

Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock. The needle kept ticking. As the night deepened, the crimson moon appeared and it was finally past nine.

Putting the Master Key and other items in his pockets, he took his cane and first went to East Borough to change his attire. Then, he rented a carriage several times until he reached a place quite far from King's Avenue in West Borough.

By then, an hour and forty-five minutes had already passed.

His initial plan was actually nothing like this. He wanted to summon himself and respond to himself to become a spirit body. He wanted to rely

on his extremely fast speed to cross the distance from Cherwood Borough to West Borough before infiltrating the Royal Museum.

However, he eventually abandoned the plan because of the potentially high risks.

Backlund had more than one High-Sequence Beyonder!

In a situation where a serial killer caused everyone to panic, yet remained unsolved for such a long time, there might be High-Sequence Beyonders who were consciously using their Beyonder powers or corresponding Sealed Artifacts to monitor certain areas. The distance from Cherwood Borough to West Borough was neither too long nor too short, and the probability of being discovered was substantial if such a special spirit flew like this.

This cannot be completely written off just because the divination result says that "the risk isn't high, but there is the existence of certain danger," because the divination doesn't give a direct answer, but a revelation that needs to be interpreted.

In other words, the results of "the risk isn't high, but there is the existence of certain danger" is built on the premise that I make a relatively good choice.

Therefore, to be careful, Klein modified his original plan but retained the core idea.

…

2 King's Avenue, Royal Museum.

There were four security guards standing on top of a polygonal roof. Dressed in thick robes, they were enduring the cold of the autumn night as they carefully monitored their respective directions. Once anyone approached the museum, even if they were hidden by the trees or building shadows, it would be difficult to hide from their eyes.

From this arrangement alone, it could be seen that the security company that had been employed was very professional.

"There's still half an hour before our shift ends…" A security guard looked down at his companions who were patrolling the building and shook his body.

In the museum, the remaining security personnel were divided into four groups. They patrolled the various exhibition halls in intervals according to different routes.

In the showroom where Roselle's diary was kept, the Machinery Hivemind squad captain, Max Livermore, wore a monocle that allowed him to directly see wraiths, shadows, and other spirit-type monsters. He carried a lantern as he went back and forth to check on the area. Occasionally, he would head to the other halls to check on the situation.

His two subordinates remained in the small hall, next to Roselle's diary.

However, there was an additional item on the glass display case.

It was a collection of brightly colored blocks that had been pieced together into a miniature layout of the museum's first floor.

This was also a Sealed Artifact. As long as those blocks were pieced into the shape of a corresponding building, they would be able to establish a connection with the real building. Once anyone intruded, its surface would react immediately by shrinking.

Of course, there were quite a few limitations to this. The distance couldn't be too far, and it wouldn't work if the number of blocks it had wasn't enough to piece together the building.

And without external help, it was almost impossible for people or items inside to leave.

"Captain, do you really think someone will steal this notebook? I can't comprehend it at all!" one of the team members asked in a bored tone when he saw Max coming back with his lantern.

Max smiled and said, "Some people adore Roselle with zeal. It's not something you can understand.

"Some of them believe that they can crack it and only need more information for reference. Some of them believe that the symbols contain a mysterious power. As long as they can find the correct combination, they will gain Beyonder powers.

"In previous exhibitions, we would capture such criminals from time to time."

"So that's why we didn't hide the notebook away and placed them in sealed areas? We are waiting for these people to 'surrender' themselves?" another teammate asked with enlightenment.

Max nodded and said, "Who wouldn't want free meritorious deeds?"

…

18 King's Avenue. Outside a building next to a crossroad junction.

Klein followed the shadows and shaded areas, using the Master Key from time to time to walk in a straight line before finally arriving here.

He took out the plain brass key, pointed it at the kitchen door, and turned it silently.

An imperceptible rippling happened as Klein entered the room. All the way through, he saw doors and walls, and without disturbing anyone, he found a storage room.

This Master Key is really useful! However, both of its previous owners lost themselves and entered dangerous spots. It makes me afraid of continuously carrying it… Klein sighed as he put away the brass key. With the room beside him being the servants' sleeping quarters, he took out Holy Night Powder and released his spirituality to seal off the storage room, making any commotion from within impossible to leak out.

Then, he took out a candle and placed it on a crate in front of him.

Pa! He snapped his finger and produced a light blue spirituality fire on his fingertip.

After the candle wick was lit, he summoned himself using ritualistic magic and then responded to himself above the gray fog.

Less than a minute later, Klein was floating in the room, facing his body whose eyes had lost their luster.

After familiarizing himself with this feeling, he wrapped the ancient and exquisite Azik copper whistle to stabilize his spirit body and made it stronger. It caused a chilly wind to begin to swirl in the room.

At the same time, he also used this power to slightly change the appearance of his illusory spirit body, causing it to appear as if there was a layer of paint on its face.

After doing all of this, Klein took a box of common matches he randomly bought off the streets, cut out a transparent door in the wall of spirituality, and headed out.

"Action time!"

He silently encouraged himself, and just like a real ghost, he passed through the residential buildings, one by one, before successfully arriving outside the Royal Museum.

There was no need to activate his Spirit Vision. In this state, he could clearly see every security personnel, their aura, and emotions which unreservedly betrayed them.

Finding the withered lawn and the iron-black lamppost that faced the hall window, Klein didn't swagger over just because ordinary people couldn't see him. Instead, he followed the shadows and took an elusive route. He passed through the sculpted tree and obstacles before cautiously arriving at his destination. He stuck close to the wall, as he couldn't guarantee that the security personnel didn't comprise of a member of the Machinery Hivemind.

At this moment, the four security guards on the rooftop, who were carefully inspecting their respective areas of operations, were like blind people. They failed to discover anything.

Klein didn't enter the exhibition hall directly, because his spiritual perception and intuition told him that the museum floor was shrouded in a mysterious power. It also had to do with how he couldn't confirm if there were Beyonders inside.

He followed his plan and circled to another area, to the washroom that was closer to the exhibition hall that housed Roselle's diary. Then, he threw the box of matches he had brought with him through the vent.

Next, he flew up and entered the second floor!

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CHAPTER 321
APPEARANCE OF A LIVING PERSON

In the exhibition hall where Roselle's diary was kept, the two Machinery Hivemind members suddenly heard a clatter.

At the same time, they turned their heads to look at the Sealed Artifact made out of blocks above the glass display case.

Inside the scaled down model of the museum's first floor, there was a gray dot that was constantly flashing.

"There's a lifeless object in the nearest washroom." One of the team members made a definite judgment.

The other team member relaxed a little, frowned, and said in a guessing tone, "A dead leaf blown in by the wind?"

"It's possible." The team member who spoke first nodded. "Let's wait till the security guards pass by, we'll get them to check and confirm the situation. Captain told us to stay here and not to leave no matter what happens, especially not alone."

In the event of an urgent emergency, they could evacuate with Roselle's notebook.

"Alright." His companion had no objection to his suggestion.

…

In the office area on the second floor of the museum, Klein was like a floating ghost, passing through one wall after another and flying directly above the restored study.

However, he didn't fly too fast. Instead, he continued to sense the fire spark below and kept track of the distance.

When the straight-line distance reached almost thirty meters, he lifted his illusory and translucent right hand and soundlessly snapped his fingers.

In the washroom on the first floor, the box of matches exploded with a soft bang.

Then, a scarlet flame leaped up and ignited a paper towel, a potted plant, and the wooden door.

The flames didn't spread yet, but it was shocking enough.

The nearby security personnel who heard the noise immediately rushed over. In the exhibition hall that was monitoring the entire situation on the first floor, the two Machinery Hivemind members also saw the flames in the model at the same time and subconsciously wanted to rush over there. This was not only an attempt to extinguish the fire, but they were also prepared to capture the troublemaker.

But the moment they took two steps, they stopped, having remembered their Captain's orders:

Don't leave this exhibition hall, don't leave Roselle's notebook, regardless of the situation!

They looked at each other, then they looked warily at the two entrances to the hall before quietly taking out their own Beyonder weapons.

As Beyonders of the Church of the God of Steam and Machinery, they were never lacking in equipment.

…

At this moment, Max Livermore was patrolling the various exhibition halls on the first floor with a lantern in hand. He had also noticed the commotion and, without thinking, rushed towards the direction of the exhibition hall where Roselle's notebook was located.

The priority to ensure the safety of the items was higher than capturing the intruder!

Moreover, Max believed that no matter what the other party's intentions were, as long as they entered the first floor of the museum and entered any of the halls, they would be under the effect of the Sealed Artifact, and it wouldn't be easy to leave that easily!

If there was no external help, the infiltrator would be trapped inside!

Even if the intruder had a helper, it would still take them quite a bit of time to get rid of the effects.

"Once you enter, you will be like prey that has fallen into a trap!" Max Livermore ran at top speed. After passing through many exhibition halls, he finally saw the silhouettes of his two companions.

At that moment, Klein, who was on the second floor of the museum, had already passed through the doors and walls according to the layout in his memory. He had arrived right above the restored study.

He was in no hurry to carry out any follow-up actions. Instead, he first looked down.

As the stone floor was relatively thick, Klein was unable to vaguely confirm if there were any auras or emotions beneath him. He could only spread his arms wide, fall forward, and silently lie on the ground.

His illusory and transparent figure quickly faded into the ground.

…

On the crystal chandelier hanging from the ceiling on the first floor, a faintly discernible human face suddenly appeared.

The strange face overlooked the exhibition hall, its eyes constantly moving, taking in the scenery of every corner in the area.

There are no Beyonders or security personnel… Mumbling to himself, Klein penetrated the ceiling and descended in front of Roselle's glass-covered desk.

He glanced at it, and without hesitation, he reached out with both hands to grab the bookmark in the manuscript of creativity and the bookmark which looked like child's graffiti.

He was trying to prevent a powerful Beyonder, who could reconstruct the scene through magical means, from knowing that he knew which bookmark was abnormal. This was to prevent the investigator from suspecting Miss Justice who had only touched one bookmark.

Augmented by Azik's copper whistle, he passed through the glass case and steadily held the two bookmarks, then he wrapped them within his spirit body.

After finishing this step, Klein's heart calmed down, no longer having any obvious nervousness or tension.

He stretched out his hands again, reaching out for the other bookmarks.

"Waaa! Waaa! Waaa!"

The loud and shrill cry of a baby suddenly reverberated within the exhibition hall.

It was so illusory, as though it came from far, far away.

Klein's body stiffened, freezing all of a sudden like a lake encountering extreme coldness.

In his spirit body state, he appeared to have been frozen!

"Waaa! Waaa! Waaa!"

Along with the cries of the baby were fine black rifts that surrounded Klein like a discontinuous iron fence.

In the blink of an eye, one of the black rifts cracked open, revealing an eyeball filled with blood strands. In the center of the eyeball was a deep pupil, and in it, countless tiny white worms were crawling and squirming.

One, two, three… Black rifts opened successively, and one by one, the bizarre eyeballs were exposed in midair. They stared at Klein in a cold and merciless manner.

As they appeared, everything around them froze in place. Even the illusory spirits were unable to penetrate through them.

It even became hard for Klein to sense the existence of the spirit world. He found it difficult to see the translucent figures that were located infinitely high. He found it hard to see the different colors, the lustrous splendors which contained various types of knowledge.

"Why did you only take the bookmarks?" A soft but unemotional female voice entered Klein's ear.

He froze on the spot and saw a tall bookcase, divided into two levels. The top level almost reached the ceiling, with a staircase and a passage surrounding countless books.

At the top of the stairs sat a figure shrouded by the darkness.

The figure's feet, which wore black leather boots, hung from the wooden stairs as they were suspended in midair.

I actually didn't sense her existence at all… Is she some powerhouse from the Machinery Hivemind? No, she might be a High-Sequence Beyonder! Klein didn't answer; instead, he narrowed his eyes.

"Why did you only take the bookmarks? Where did you learn to only take the bookmarks?"

The figure asked once more. The gentleness had a hint of sternness, and the bloodshot eyeballs surrounding him rapidly widened, as though they wanted to occupy the entire space.

Before she could finish her sentence, Klein revealed a wide smile on his face.

His illusory, nearly translucent figure instantly disappeared, leaving his whereabouts unknown!

Even Azik's copper whistle and the two bookmarks which were wrapped in his spirit body had vanished!

…

Above the gray fog, within the majestic ancient palace.

Klein's figure suddenly appeared at the top of the long, mottled table.

He leaned back into his chair and said with a chuckle, "Fortunately, I was prepared."

The state of his spirit body wasn't part of his Beyonder powers. It didn't originate from the transformation between his physical body and spirit body. This was the result of him summoning himself and responding to his ritual.

And the power of this ritual came from the mysterious space above the gray fog. It stemmed from its special nature!

Hence, as long as Klein succeeded, he wouldn't even need to try to escape. By just ending the summoning directly, he would be able to return to the gray fog and, from here, instantly return to his physical body in the real world!

As the space above the gray fog could block the power of deities like the Eternal Blazing Sun and the True Creator, Klein believed that, without the interference of deities, the summoning wouldn't be interrupted!

As long as the enemy didn't kill his spirit body or instantly knock him unconscious, Klein had the confidence to escape!

This was also the reason why he didn't want to become a spirit body and still make a "long trek" over to the museum. The more time spent, added even more variables.

…

As the faint and dark crimson moonlight shone in from the window, the woman sitting at the top of the stairs between the bookshelves looked at the desk in silence. She looked at the spot where Klein had been. The surrounding cries of the baby and the eyeballs had disappeared one after another.

After an unknown period of time, the top of the stairs suddenly became empty, as if no one had ever been there before.

In the exhibition hall which housed Roselle's diary, Max Livermore said to his two team members, "Watch this place well. I'll go find the infiltrator.

"He must still be trapped somewhere on the first floor by the power of the Sealed Artifact!"

As he spoke, he looked at the Sealed Artifact, the "model" of the first floor of the museum in a bid to find the red dot which represented the infiltrator and lock onto that person's location.

However, no matter how he looked and counted, something didn't seem right.

The number of people hadn't increased!

"This…” Max Livermore froze where he was.

…

18 King's Avenue, in a certain wealthy merchant's storage room.

Klein's eyes lit up again, and the corners of his mouth curled up.

He left the bookmarks and Azik's copper whistle above the gray fog, and he didn't waste time returning to his body.

After extinguishing the candles and ending the ritual, Klein cleaned up the scene. He used a specially concocted medication to neutralize the smell of the Holy Night Powder and the essential oils from the ritual.

After doing all of this, he dispelled the wall of spirituality, allowing the wind to blow away the remaining traces.

Next, he took out his Master Key, planning to go through buildings before taking a rental carriage a distance away.

Using his cane to determine his direction to prevent himself from getting lost and heading back to the Royal Museum or to a particular cathedral, Klein headed off at a brisk pace, opening the walls and doors that stood in his way with the Master Key.

After walking in a straight line for a while, he suddenly felt like he was unable to determine his position.

Hmm… Two more buildings and I'll be out. If I'm no longer on King's Avenue, I'll get a rental carriage, or I'll make another divination? I'll immediately study the Card of Blasphemy once I'm home! Klein quickly made up his mind. He placed the brass key which was simply shaped against the wall and gently twisted it.

As the formless ripples spread out, he arrived at a neighboring building of the terraces.

At this moment, his nose twitched as he smelled a strong stench of blood.

The strong smell of blood! Klein frowned. He looked up and saw a lady laid out in the living room ahead of him.

The woman's expression was filled with pain. There was a large wound at her abdomen, and her internal organs seemed to have disappeared.

At the same time, Klein heard grunting noises.

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CHAPTER 322
THE THRILLING NIGHT

The twelfth case!

That Devil serial murderer!

The moment he saw the corpse and heard the sound, Klein's hair stood on end. He knew that he had encountered a bad situation.

Within his line of sight, the living room's decorations were mostly brilliant yellow and bright. There was nothing unusual about the coffee table and sofa. Only the carpet was stained bright red with blood as it slowly soaked through.

On the side of the wound on the female corpse's abdomen, which was completely empty, sat a large sized black dog. Its mouth was half open, revealing many sharp white teeth that sent shivers. On each tooth, there were dark red marks like iron rust. This seemed to be the result of its prolonged consumption of flesh without frequent brushing.

At this moment, the large black dog's teeth were still wrapped around blood-red small intestines, as well as bits and pieces of raw meat.

Its head turned over, and its eyes which resembled magma reflected Klein, who was dressed as a worker, and his disguised face.

"Grunt!" The large black dog let out a roar which sounded like it was showing dominance.

It really is an animal! It's a Sequence 6 Devil, a Devil which is about to advance! And none of the preparations that I made today were for it… These few thoughts instantly flashed through Klein's mind.

Suddenly, the black dog's body expanded rapidly, turning into a two-to three-meter tall monster. On its back, a pair of giant bat wings slowly spread open, and beside its ears, goat horns covered in mysterious patterns grew out.

Red and blue flames leaped from of its luxuriant fur as the strong smell of sulfur followed.

Almost at the same time, Klein stomped on the ground. Instead of retreating, he advanced, swinging his cane as he shot out at the gigantic Devil dog like a cannonball.

Schwing!

The black Devil dog quickly pounced forward. Its sharp claws created afterimages as it swiped at Klein's body.

Without a sound, its claws had penetrated the figure, as if they were piercing through the air!

Klein's figure became faint as it quickly turned transparent.

It was just an illusion!

It was an illusion created by Klein!

At this moment, he had already rolled on the ground and closed in towards the oriel window. Then, with his left hand pressing down, his entire body flew into the air, directly smashing through the glass.

After identifying the enemy, he made up his mind to escape!

Upon seeing this, the eyes of the huge Devil dog immediately lit up like magma, as if there was a raging fire inside.

It opened its mouth, which emitted a putrid smell, and said a word filled with foulness, a word that came from the Devil language, "Die!"

Oof!

Klein's body suddenly stopped, his heart felt as if it was being tightly clenched by an invisible hand.

The figure that was frozen in midair instantly became thin and dim, turning into a crudely cut paper figurine.

And this paper figurine was covered with red rust!

Smash! Clang! Two sounds of indistinguishable order sounded. Klein's figure appeared again, smashing through the oriel window and pouncing towards the stone paved street. The Paper Figurine Substitute slowly floated down as it ignited and emitted the smell of sulfur.

The Devil dog let out a low growl and pounced again, jumping onto the windowsill.

A crimson-blue fireball flew out from its mouth, blasting in the direction of its enemy's escape route.

The moment Klein landed on the ground, he immediately followed up with another roll. The crimson-blue fireball smashed to his side, but it didn't explode immediately, as if it was being affected by an invisible force as though it was being detained.

Boom!

Only after Klein had scrambled a distance away did the fireball expand and explode, shattering the surrounding stone pavements.

Seeing that the Devil dog was about to pursue him, Klein opened his mouth, having prepared for this.

He shouted at the top of his lungs, "Murder! Save me! Murder! Save me!"

His voice seemed to be augmented with special effects. It echoed far and wide through the silent night, waking the residents of the entire street and sending them into the ears of the patrollers who were two streets away.

The giant Devil dog paused in its pouncing posture. After thinking for a second, it retreated back into the room and began to clean up the scene.

Klein's sprinting figure also disappeared under the shouts of "murder" and "save me."

Inside a nearby fireplace that had long since been extinguished, the remnant charcoal suddenly reignited, and an exaggerated flame rose up.

Klein seemed to be performing a magic trick as he appeared out of the flames. With a light leap, he held his cane and jumped out.

Then, he used the Master Key to open the door, tear through walls, and quickly escaped in another direction.

Phew, at a time like this, a scream without Beyonder powers is much more useful than simulating gunshots… Klein sighed as he took out a bottle of Amantha extract and dripped a few drops on himself.

As the original race of the Devil was of the dog species, he had to be wary of its scent-tracking abilities being one of its special powers!

In this way, Klein continued on until he reached another cross-junction. Only then did he stop and look around.

Seeing that it was relatively quiet and unaffected, he hurried to the side of the street and hired a rental carriage.

It was only after the carriage had traveled a certain distance in the night when Klein finally heave a breath of relief. He knew that the Devil wouldn't catch up to him.

This Master Key is really strange… I actually got lost and found myself at the scene of the murder. I have to be a lot more careful when using it in the future… That really was a Devil transformed from an animal… Where did its potions and formulas come from? Does it have a human companion? How did it pick its target for the serial murder?

Hmm, what's gratifying is that after confirming this point, it will be much more difficult for it to commit crimes again, and the probability of getting caught will also greatly increase…

All sorts of thoughts and questions appeared in Klein's mind as the carriage sped along the wide, deserted road which was lined with gas street lamps.

Suddenly, Klein's heart skipped a beat, and an image naturally appeared in his mind.

Pea vines drooped down from the sky and interweaved to form a dense forest. However, the carriage driver didn't seem to notice and continued to drive the carriage across the green vegetation.

No good!

Without hesitation, Klein lunged for the window, about to jump into the street.

Bang! The carriage shook, and he was flung backward.

At the same time, those pea vines really drooped down!

Klein frowned as he attempted to use Flame Controlling to ignite the carriage, but no sound came from his fingers.

At this moment, the surroundings had become abnormally quiet. Even the sounds of the horses' hooves trampling and the rapid rumbling of the wheels over the green vegetation had disappeared.

Klein tried his best to calm himself down as he looked out the window and saw that the carriage had been driven into the air, following the road of pea vines.

No, this isn't Backlund.… He narrowed his eyes.

At this moment, the carriage stopped. Outside the window, the pea vines had formed a hammock in the air.

A pair of feet in black leather boots drooped down, and a gentle but emotionless voice entered Klein's ears.

"What were you doing?"

*It's that woman inside the museum… She's suspected to be a High-Sequence Beyonder… She doesn't seem to recognize me. After all, I had disguised myself with Azik's copper whistle… She must have heard the cry for help and came over to check… *Klein's thoughts were abnormally active at that moment.

He deliberately gulped and said, "I'm a private detective. Many friends and I are investigating the recent serial murders.

"I have a mystical item called the 'Master Key.' It can open doors and let me pass through walls, but it will cause the holder to get lost.

"It was during this process that I ran into the scene of the crime. Because I wasn't the murderer's opponent, I could only shout for help while running."

Everything I said was the truth.… Klein silently added in his heart.

After he finished speaking, there was temporarily no response from the outside. However, he felt that a gaze had penetrated the carriage, passed through the obstructions, and was directly inspecting the items on his body.

Fortunately, I left Azik's copper whistle and the bookmarks above the gray fog just in case… At that moment, Klein was very glad.

Caution and carefulness were indeed useful!

After the indescribable and torturous silence, the gentle but emotionless female voice finally sounded again.

"That key has a certain curse. It must not be used unless absolutely necessary."

As soon as she finished her sentence, the surroundings changed completely. Everything—the pea vines, the road through the forest, the road to the sky—had all disappeared. The carriage continued on the streets, driving between the elegant iron-black gas street lamps.

Klein remained on tenterhooks until the carriage arrived near East Borough, where he paid the fare of 8 soli.

Under normal circumstances, a rental carriage wouldn't enter any of East Borough streets because it was likely to be robbed.

In one of the rooms on Black Palm Street, Klein changed his clothes and went straight to sleep. He didn't attempt to return to Minsk Street before midnight. The twelfth murder had just occurred, and it would only serve to make Backlund's situation tenser.

He didn't immediately go above the gray fog to study the secret of the "bookmark." He acted just as he had described himself to the mysterious woman. He was a Low-Sequence Beyonder, a private investigator with some Beyonder powers.

Tonight sure was filled with surprises. It was rather thrilling. All I did was steal something… Yes, most of the problems can be blamed on the Master Key… Klein made a self-deprecating comment and quickly fell asleep.

The next morning, he breathed in the choking smog as he slowly strolled home and picked up the newspapers and letters from his mailbox.

After opening the door, he casually flipped opened the newspaper to take a look and found that the headline was as he had expected: "The twelfth case!"

"The Devil has appeared again. The police have declared that they have locked onto the murderer!"

…

As for the theft of the objects in the Royal Museum, it was only mentioned in an inconspicuous location. In fact, the article didn't even mention what the stolen object was.

The unstamped letter that came with the newspaper was a water bill that Klein had to pay for himself. He glanced at it and casually threw it on the coffee table. He then returned to the second floor to heat up water for a bath.

He waited until the water vapor filled the bathroom before he seized the opportunity to take four steps counterclockwise to enter the space above the gray fog.

Inside the immutable ancient palace, Klein sat down and picked up the bookmark that depicted the figure of Emperor Roselle.

*It really wasn't easy getting you! *He gently caressed the surface of the cardboard and silently sighed.

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CHAPTER 323
THE OPENING INCANTATION

The bookmark was, on the surface, nothing special. Roselle's portraits had been placed everywhere around the exhibition hall, and the image depicted was from the period when he was middle-aged.

Klein kept flipping the bookmark repeatedly, in scrutiny, and found a tiny puncture, thereby confirming that this was the bookmark which Miss Justice had verified.

He tried to spread his spirituality, and he slowly injected it inside. However, just like with ordinary objects, his spirituality only flowed and failed to permeate it, nor did it cause any abnormal changes.

That's right, Roselle had the intention of finding someone who was fated, so he wouldn't specifically restrict it to Beyonders… Klein thought for a moment, then said softly in Feysac, "Pirate King!"

The bookmark still didn't respond.

He tried the words in ancient Feysac, Intis, Loen, and other languages again, but the result was the same.

As for Jotun, Elvish, Dragonese, and other languages from the mysticism domain, Klein could only try them out of hope since they was overly restrictive and unlikely to be the language used.

Without a doubt, he failed.

Immediately following that, Klein used Feysac again as he translated, "One Piece!"

The bookmark lay quietly on his palm, showing no sign of abnormality.

Klein tried the steps he did from before, using different languages again, but he was constantly met with failure.

It seems that my initial guess was wrong. The young Roselle might've used the meme of Pirate King to make a joke, but he might not necessarily do that when he was older. People will ultimately grow old and change. Klein reflected over his mistake as he tapped the edge of the long, mottled table with his finger, trying hard to infer from the bits of information that the diary had provided to unlock the bookmark.

After a while, he took out a pen and paper, and he wrote down his thought process so as to avoid any confusion or contradictions.

While doing this, Roselle was definitely maniacal and in despair. It also clearly showcases his warped humor. "The fated ones will receive it" is proof considering how it doesn't suit the world's lingo at present.

Therefore, I can be certain that he really wanted someone to discover the uniqueness of the Cards of Blasphemy by chance.

In that case, the unlocking method can't be too unimaginable, or something that will often appear in daily life.

What Roselle required was a coincidence. For example, when someone holds the worthless bookmark and randomly says a specific word, then, congratulations, you have obtained a fortuitous opportunity! Yes, this is very in line with his warped humor.

Going by this logical train of thought, different Cards of Blasphemy should have different unlocking incantations. Using a single term to unlock all the Cards of Blasphemy clearly isn't congruent with Roselle's style.

What is the incantation for unlocking this card? Well, the first things that can be ruled out are the words that are commonly used, words that are said all the time.

Also, when creating the Cards of Blasphemy, Roselle's state was in despair, maniacal, unwilling to part with it, reminiscent, struggling, and angry. I can try to immerse myself in that state of mind and imagine myself to be Roselle at that point in time. I can imagine what kind of incantation I would have used.

Klein stopped writing and began acting as Roselle in a bid to find some inspiration.

He first tried out vulgarities in different languages, including ancient Feysac, as well as terms pertaining to hope, but unfortunately, was rewarded with failure.

Immediately after, he tried to figure out what would be the last thing a desperate powerhouse would be reluctant to part.

His wife, Matilda? Such a licentious guy shouldn't have such deep feelings for his first wife.

His children? The eldest daughter, Bernadette; the eldest son, Ciel; and the second son, Bornova…

According to the diary, the person he can't get over the most was his daughter, Bernadette, who might become an important figure in the mysterious world.

Klein paused, took a breath, and prepared to try again.

"Bernadette," he said in the Intis language.

The bookmark didn't respond.

Klein switched to the languages of Loen, Highlander, and Feysac, but still failed to achieve the desired results.

He sighed and said with a deep voice which corresponded to ancient Feysac, "Bernadette."

This name echoed in the empty and quiet gray fog like it was nothing special. Just as Klein was about to search for new inspiration, he suddenly felt the bookmark in his hand sink!

It immediately turned into an invisible whirlpool which wildly absorbed Klein's mental energies.

For an ordinary person, this was a huge burden, but for a Sequence 7 Magician, it wasn't especially draining. Klein easily survived this hurdle and couldn't conceal his joy as he looked at the object in his palm.

A bright light emitted, bit by bit, from the bookmark, and the image of Emperor Roselle on the outside was being replaced by an entirely new image.

He was sitting on an ancient stone throne as he wore a black crown embedded with various precious stones on his head. He wore pitch-black armor, and a cape of the same color was draped over his body. He held a scepter, and he looked forward with cold, aloof eyes.

On the upper-left corner of the bookmark, there was a line of text condensed from the bright radiance of stars.

"Sequence 0: Dark Emperor!"

Sequence 0! Indeed, the secrets of the gods are hidden within! The Dark Emperor is actually Sequence 0… Klein thought with a smile, half sighing and half surprised.

Soon after, the bookmark became three-dimensional, like a miniature book.

The book moved without the wind, revealing a Roselle in a white hood. Beside it was a corresponding description in ancient Feysac.

"Sequence 9, Lawyer.

"Good at discovering and using loopholes in the rules and the weaknesses of their opponents. Possesses excellent eloquence and reasoning skills…

"Potion formula…”

Klein glanced at the formula ingredients but didn't look carefully. He reached out his hand and touched it, making the book flip to the next page.

"Sequence 8: Barbarian.

"Problems that cannot be solved by the law will be solved by force. This is also one of the rules… The Beyonders at this Sequence have a high resistance to psychological influences…

"Potion formula…”

As Klein touched it, the book conjured from the Card of Blasphemy flipped through one page at a time.

"Sequence 7: Briber."

…

"Sequence 6: Baron of Corruption."

…

"Sequence 5: Mentor of Confusion".

…

"Sequence 4: Count of The Fallen"

…

"Sequence 3: Frenzied Mage."

…

"Sequence 2: Duke of Entropy."

…

"Sequence 1: Prince of Disorder."

…

"Sequence 0: Dark Emperor."

…

After skimming through the book, Klein couldn't help but sigh.

This really hides the profound secrets of becoming a God!

It's no wonder all of the High-Sequence Beyonders who tread this pathway will attempt to establish their own kingdoms, and walk the lands.

It's because the ritual of becoming a god requires it!

To advance from Sequence 1, the Prince of Disorder, to Dark Emperor, the necessary ritual requires one to possess their own country, linking their name to the title of Emperor, making it common knowledge among the populace. Furthermore, one needed to establish a set of strict and complicated rules that defied normality, including architectural styles.

Then, they would spur on their citizens to secretly establish nine mausoleums that were similar to pyramids. After which, they would enter one of the mausoleums. With a large majority of the citizens who would be scattered across different cities in corresponding sacrificial rituals involved, the Prince of Disorder would imbibe the Sequence 9 potion.

Once the advancement was successful, the Dark Emperor wouldn't truly die until all the nine secret mausoleums were destroyed. Even if "He" was annihilated, "He" would still be able to awaken and return from one of the mausoleums.

What was even more terrifying was that even if the deity was successfully killed and all nine mausoleums destroyed, as long as a certain amount of the order set up by that deity remained, it was still possible for "Him" to mysteriously revive. It appeared to be a loophole against death.

The best way to completely obliterate "Him" was for a new Dark Emperor to appear!

"This is a deity!

"Mortals cannot fight against deities; same for angels.

"Those who have yet to become deities will never be able to fathom the power of deities."

Roselle exposited with deep implications at the end.

In addition, Klein also knew one thing, once there was a True God with a Sequence 0, it was impossible for a Sequence 1 Beyonder to appear. If there was no Sequence 0, then, in the same way, there would be at most three Sequence 1 Beyonders. This was a result of the Law of Beyonder Characteristics Indestructibility and Conservation!

According to the Dark Emperor Card of Blasphemy's description of the 10 Sequences, Klein could clearly see that the greatest feature of this pathway

was the shadow of it gradually evolving into order!

Roselle also mentioned that if one had that Card of Blasphemy in hand after advancing to a High-Sequence Beyonder, the card would have a subtle reaction to the Beyonder ingredients that the person needed!

Of course, it was limited to High-Sequence Beyonders of the Dark Emperor pathway.

*What a pity, this is of no use to me. *Klein looked at the Card of Blasphemy thin down again, turning back into a poker card.

However, it was no longer in disguise. On the surface, it depicted Roselle sitting on a stone throne—Sequence 0 Dark Emperor!

Klein remained silent for a few seconds before he sighed silently.

This card's biggest use to me is to exchange the formulas for the items I need. There's also some information about deities and Sequences. Apart from that, there's almost no other use for it.

Heh, at the very least, as the leader of the Tarot Club and as The Fool, I will no longer be an empty shell. I now hold one path of the divine, and it's not like I can't produce a High-Sequence Beyonder formula anymore!

Yes… I remember that at the Beyonder gathering organized by Old Mister "Eye of Wisdom," the lady who is suspected to have an Artisan backing her has been always seeking to purchase the potion formula of Barbarian.

As his mind whirled, Klein took another look at the Roselle portrait on the Dark Emperor card and couldn't help laughing.

He has made every Sequence in his own image. What a narcissist…

I'm suddenly very curious what the Card of Blasphemy for the Demoness pathway would look like. Hehe.

Reining in his thoughts, Klein destroyed the other bookmark he had casually picked up and discovered that it was just an ordinary bookmark.

After doing all of this, he changed his seating posture and leaned back into his chair. He responded to Miss Justice's plea from last night and said calmly, "That was a Card of Blasphemy made by Roselle."

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CHAPTER 324
IMAGINED AND REAL "ADORER"

Empress Borough, Count Hall's home, dining room.

As per usual tradition, Audrey was saying grace with her father, mother, and elder brother before dinner.

"Praise the Goddess!" She tapped her chest in four spots in a clockwise manner to end the prayer.

However, before she finished speaking, her vision was covered by a thick gray fog. A distant figure that seemed to be looking down at everyone and everything opened his mouth with dominance.

"That was a Card of Blasphemy made by Roselle."

Mr. Fool… Card of Blasphemy? Audrey, who finally received a response, was joyful at first, but then she fell into a daze. She couldn't understand what the so-called Card of Blasphemy referred to.

However, she quickly made a guess. She had always known that Emperor Roselle had made a secret deck of cards representing some unknown force which had twenty-two cards in total. It was believed to have been referenced from tarot cards.

Furthermore, she had also heard from The Hanged Man that the secret to the deck of cards was that they hid the paths of the divine, the path to becoming a god!

So it's called a Card of Blasphemy… It corresponds to the Blasphemy Slate… This is definitely a treasure of the highest level in the mysterious world!

The paths of the divine!

It's no wonder that Mr. Fool's adorer had to ask for help. He wanted to ensure that the card was the real one before taking action. It was to prevent a mistake from happening. Instead of getting the right target, it might end up informing the Church of the God of Steam and Machinery that a particular bookmark hides a Card of Blasphemy.

I wonder if he succeeded…

The Beyonders from the Church of the God of Steam and Machinery haven't come to make any routine inquiries. Perhaps, he's still making plans…

As her body trembled faintly, Audrey once again saw a figure praying inside the thick fog, an extremely blurry figure.

He was saying respectfully, "The Great Fool, please convey my gratitude to the authenticator. This allowed my operation to go smoothly.

"For that, I'm willing to raise the reward to 3,000 pounds which can be deducted from the 5,000 pounds that haven't been paid yet. This is the share that the other party deserves."

He succeeded? He succeeded just like that? But when I looked at the front pages of those newspapers, there was no news of the theft at the exhibition. It was all news of the twelfth victim of the serial murder… Raising the reward to 3,000 pounds implies that Mr. Fool's adorer had indeed succeeded in retrieving the bookmark containing the Card of Blasphemy without anyone noticing! How cool! Although the term invented by Emperor Roselle may not be elegant, reserved, or in line with my identity as a noble identity, it's the only impression that I feel right now!

Our Tarot Club now has a complete path of the divine in its control!

It should be a complete one, right?

I wonder which one it is.

But regardless, this represents the path to becoming a god!

Under the glory of Mr. Fool, we will one day become the most powerful hidden faction in the world!

I wonder if the other bookmarks hide Cards of Blasphemy…

Audrey controlled her excitement as she felt longing and pride. She allowed the dining maid to help her spread out a napkin before her gaze shifted to Count Hall, who habitually read the newspapers while having breakfast.

"Father, is there anything worth paying attention to today?"

Count Hall sighed and said, "That devil has killed another innocent person. It's the 12th case. She's a fashion designer who had just become famous. She had only been a street girl a few times due to her desperate need for money, but she ended up encountering such a terrible situation.

"Thankfully, there was an eyewitness. The person witnessed the devil at the crime scene. Heh, he was really scared out of his wits. He constantly shouted on the streets 'murder' and 'save me.' Heh heh. I have to say that his cries for help did bring acceptable results. The devil didn't chase after him.

"As a result, the police have locked onto the suspect and are hunting him down."

Audrey drew the crimson moon on her chest once again and said, "May their operation succeed.

"Father, from what you just said, it sure was a horrible but funny scene.

"I hope that eyewitness won't have nightmares because of it."

And on the same night, Mr. Fool's adorer took one of the Cards of Blasphemy from the heavily protected museum without alerting anyone… Audrey added wistfully in her mind and filled in some of the details herself.

…

Royal Museum, in the restored study.

"Are you sure that only two bookmarks were stolen?" the Machinery Hivemind squad's Captain Max Livermore asked his team members.

As he spoke, he stole a glance at the important figure standing in front of the desk with his back facing him.

It was an old man wearing a white clerical robe and a clerical cap. He was the head of the Church of the God of Steam and Machinery for the Backlund diocese. He was a member of the Divine Council, Archbishop Horamick Haydn.

This important figure wasn't only a clergyman, but he was also a very famous scientist, a distinguished professor of physics at Backlund University.

"Yes, only two bookmarks were stolen," The team member being questioned answered with certainty.

Max nodded slightly and looked at Horamick Hayden. After some thought, he deliberated and asked, "Your Excellency, after the closing of the museum yesterday evening, some aristocratic children came to visit. They had touched parts of the exhibited items, including one of the two bookmarks that were stolen. Do I need to get them to cooperate with the investigation?"

"I know about that." Horamick's hands naturally drooped down as he turned around and said in a calm tone, "I've already confirmed that those

aristocratic children are not related to the thief who stole the bookmarks, so there's no need to get them to cooperate with the investigation."

"Yes, Your Excellency." Max himself didn't think there was anything wrong with the aristocratic children, not to mention that Archbishop Haydn had enough mysticism knowledge and Beyonder techniques to confirm it.

Horamick's gentle and benevolent face didn't show the slightest trace of anger. He looked around and said, "There was more than one person here last night, at least two of them. They were divided into two opposing groups.

"One of them might even be of a higher Sequence than me, while the other had somehow escaped mysteriously.

"Although I'm unable to reconstruct the entire scene, there are still some things that I can 'see.'

"This matter is more complicated than we thought."

At this point, he sighed.

"I also know why they wanted to steal the bookmarks.

"We've been tricked by Roselle for more than 150 years…”

…

Giving up 3,000 pounds sure does hurts. I've saved up for so long and yet, I have less than 1,000 pounds… However, the Card of Blasphemy is a priceless treasure that cannot be exchanged, even with money. The contribution Miss Justice had made in this matter is definitely worth the price…

*Thankfully, I could deduct it from what she owes me, lightening my burden. If I ever meet Mr. Azik in the future, I'll pay him the 15,000 pounds

that belong to the "adorer" with a High-Sequence Beyonder formula… I wonder what the other Cards of Blasphemy were disguised to look like. According to the personality of the Emperor, they should all be rather surprising… *After Klein finished his reply and looked out the palace at the sea of gray fog, he silently sighed.

As a precaution, he temporarily left his Dark Emperor card above the gray fog, on the surface of the long bronze table facing the seat of The Fool. He did so for Azik's copper whistle as well.

When he returned to the real world, he held a ritual again and summoned himself to throw the Master Key, a Sealed Artifact which was an amalgamation of getting lost and having bad luck, above the gray fog. Although it didn't seem to have huge negative effects, it was enough to cause one to encounter life-threatening situations. He planned not to use it unless necessary.

The Master Key is just a relic of an unlucky fellow who had just advanced to Sequence 9. Yet, it has a negative influence that even a Mid-Sequence Beyonder is unable to weaken… It seems like there's an additional factor in the reason why the Apprentice lost control, which led to something abnormal…

Now that I think about it, my previous decision was correct. To explore 32 Verdi Street south of the bridge, I need to be careful and be prepared… Yes, I need to be aware of something. A Sealed Artifact's effects might not be completely related to the owner's Sequence. I have to consider multiple factors, such as whether or not it has been contaminated by an evil god…

Klein took a bath with the water that had already turned cold before walking out of the bathroom, refreshed. He went downstairs to enjoy the corn pancakes he had bought on his way back. They were local delights of the Feynapotter Klein's Highlands—crispy, fragrant, and sweet.

After he had eaten his fill, he went through his experiences from last night to see if he had left any clues behind.

Even with the Master Key, if I'm not a Beyonder, it's impossible for me to escape from the hands of a Devil. Back then, the mysterious and powerful lady must've determined that I wasn't an ordinary private detective. I also didn't have any intention of hiding that point.

By not capturing me, this implies that she's either an official Beyonder who is friendly to wild Beyonders, or she's not a member of the three Churches or the military. Yes, I'm more inclined with the latter point. The former point would most likely have her confiscate the Master Key. Sigh, back then, I was almost on the brink of despair. I thought I would be detained in the underground prison of the Church of the God of Steam and Machinery like ordinary Beyonders. I even began considering my prison break. Who would've known that she would just leave.

Which organization is she from? Or is she wild? No, for wild Beyonders to reach her level of power, they must have an organization of their own.

That Devil dog would definitely use its Beyonder powers to erase clues related to itself, and that naturally includes me. In the field of mysticism, there is no way to separate them, and that lady probably can't be exposed as well. From the looks of it, the clues that I left behind while escaping had most likely have been interfered with.

As for what happened in the museum, they will be searching for a special spirit body, a strange existence, and what has that got to do with me, Sherlock Moriarty? Klein mocked himself as his heart grew calmer.

Of course, he had dared to return home because he had divined it in advance. It was just like he was unafraid that the museum contained traps that he found completely unsolvable.

*Phew, this matter has come to an end… What should I do today? Practice my Beyonder powers and go to the Quelaag Club to scrounge a meal in passing? Well, I don't know if the Nighthawks and Mandated Punishers have identified the murderer or not. Why don't I write another letter to

Isengard Stanton and give myself a hint? *As his thoughts raced, Klein heard someone from outside approach before leaving.

Another letter? He opened the door in puzzlement, and indeed, he saw a letter lying in his mailbox.

The letter was from Isengard Stanton.

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CHAPTER 325
THE EQUESTRIAN TEACHER'S PROBLEM

When he returned to the living room, Klein picked up a letter opener and opened the envelope before taking out Isengard Stanton's letter.

The famous detective wrote:

"Your idea has greatly helped us. Please allow me to thank you here first.

"After receiving your letter, we immediately organized some people to sweep through crucial areas. As expected, we found some clues, and quite a few stray animals that had frequently appeared and were remembered by the residents had disappeared.

"In the process, we also noticed an interesting thing. Four years ago, in the serial murder case, yes—the targets were single prostitutes with a child. Quite a few people living near the scene of the crime had mentioned that although the most suspicious teenager was eccentric and vicious, he was quite fond of animals, especially a large black dog.

"After the boy died in the gang firefight, the people who lived around him never saw the dog again.

"I'm curious. Who is its current owner? Was it the murderer of some unsolved serial murder case from even further back?

"The above facts have all been proven to be true at the scene of the 12th murder case, and it has played a key role in giving the police a preliminary

idea of the suspect. If all goes well, and the culprit is arrested, we will be able to get the majority of the reward money.

"My friend, I clearly remember your contribution. I will not forget your share."

…

Isengard Stanton seems to suspect that I knew the truth about the Devil, so he had deliberately hinted at something? Klein put down the letter and mumbled silently.

However, this letter also made him feel relieved.

The official Beyonders weren't looking for the wrong person!

If the gigantic Devil dog didn't get receive any additional help, then it was only a matter of time before it was caught and killed.

As for Isengard Stanton's prediction that there was another master, Klein didn't have enough evidence to confirm the matter, so it could only be said that there was a certain probability.

In short, my mission ends here. The job is now left to the Nighthawks, Mandated Punishers, and Machinery Hivemind squads. Klein pulled out a fresh sheet of paper, picked up a fountain pen, and replied Isengard Stanton with a letter filled with humility. He also ignored his subtle hints like a real, ordinary private detective.

After cutting another paper figurine and sending the letter, Klein strolled to the public carriage stop to wait. He thought in a relaxed manner, *The next thing to do is wait for the money…*

Leppard said he would be visiting the Roselle Memorial Exhibition for three days straight. I'll have to wait until Saturday before visiting to find him and make the final payment. Hopefully, the patent for the bicycle will be filed by

then. Sigh, the Backlund Patent Office seems to be known for its inefficiency.

Klein had already made plans for the day. Since there was no Beyonder gathering, resulting in him being unable to buy the appropriate items, he suddenly had a lot of free time. He didn't need to busy himself for a short period of time.

In the morning, I'll go to the Quelaag Club, practice my marksmanship, practice my Beyonder powers, have lunch there, and then find a better circus to observe the magician's performance and see if I can get some inspiration. He took out his golden pocket watch and looked at it. He boarded the public carriage in a good mood.

…

Hillston Borough, Quelaag Club.

Since Klein came by at least twice a week, the attendants remembered him and didn't require him to show his proof of membership or his Frost constellation badge.

It was Wednesday morning, and since most of the Quelaag Club's members belonged to the middle-class, where they still had fixed and decent jobs, it was difficult for them to visit the club unless it was Sunday, tea time, or when they took time off from work.

The spacious and bright hall seemed abnormally empty. There were only a few people sitting in the corner where the coffee tables and sofas were.

Glancing around, Klein spotted an acquaintance and went up to greet him, "Talim, with such terrific weather today, you should be at the turf club."

The acquaintance was Talim, the aristocratic equestrian teacher who had introduced him to the club at the request of Mrs. Mary Dumont. He had

once brought Klein business—the protection of Daily Observer reporter Mike Joseph on his trip to the Golden Rose for investigations.

Talim looked up, touched his short brown curls, and smiled.

"Oh my, it's the honorable great detective. What have you been up to? I haven't seen you in a long time. "

That's because you haven't been to the club for days… Klein smiled as he sat on the sofa next to Talim.

"I've been helping the police with the serial murder case. Although it might not necessarily yield any results, the reward is tempting enough. Besides, establishing good relations with the police is very important for us private investigators."

What I just said was bragging. I'm just an unremarkable character who'd been summoned… he mocked himself inwardly.

Among the few members sitting in the same sofa area behind them, a man who appeared to be a stockbroker initiated a discussion on the latest Western Railway shares and East Balam Plantation shares.

Talim didn't doubt Klein's answer. He chuckled and said, "This is indeed something that will busy a great detective."

After exchanging a few pleasantries, he gradually entered a pensive state.

Just as Klein was about to bid him farewell and leave for the underground shooting range, Talim suddenly looked at him and said, "Mr. Moriarty, may I ask you a question?

"Uh, you can charge me a consultation fee."

"This one is free. Also, just call me Sherlock." Klein laughed.

Talim nodded gently and said hesitantly, "I have a friend who has fallen in love with someone he shouldn't have. How should he deal with such a situation?"

Although I had always believed that anyone who asks a question prefaced with "I have a friend" basically means "I myself," Talim's emotional colors implies that it's not for himself. He's in a dilemma, but I can't see any traces of pain… After activating his Spirit Vision, Klein leaned back slightly, clasped his hands, and said, "I'm sorry, but I'm not a psychiatrist or any of the experts in the newspapers or magazines who are good at solving emotional problems.

"My only advice is not to break the law.

"Heh heh, that was a joke. First, we need to understand how this 'shouldn't have' arose. Is there a feud between the family?"

Talim glanced at him and said in resignation, "No, this isn't Romeo and Juliet!"

Upon hearing Talim's reply, Klein seemed to hear an illusory murmur in his ears.

Author: Roselle Gustav… Author: Roselle Gustav… Author: Roselle Gustav…

Shaking his head, he apologized to Shakespeare and smiled.

"This piece of work by Emperor Roselle is just too classic. When it comes to love that shouldn't be, I can't help but think of it.

"Then why shouldn't they be together?"

Talim fell silent for a few seconds before saying, "I have to keep it confidential. I'm sorry, just pretend I didn't ask."

Confidential? That must be someone with certain standing… In love with someone of the same sex? In love with someone who is related by blood? Klein held back his curiosity and said with his hands spread out, "Then I can only give you one more suggestion. Read best-sellers about passionate love like Stormwind Mountain Villa and Love and Jealousy."

Talim quivered his lips a few times, sighed, and said, "Sigh, that can only be used as the last resort. In my opinion, the feelings present in those best-selling novels simply don't seem to occur among normal people."

"I think so too!" Klein echoed in full agreement.

After exchanging a smile with Talim, he got up and went to the underground shooting range to practice his shooting and Beyonder powers. When it was almost noon, he returned to the first floor and went straight to the buffet cafeteria.

He had noticed earlier that the cuisine that was in limited supply today was red wine fried foie gras, paired with sliced apples and bread soaked in butter.

After taking his food, Klein carried his tray to the table where Talim was sitting. At that moment, there was another acquaintance of his, who, by the same token, had recommended his membership. He was the surgeon, Aaron Ceres.

Before he could sit down after setting the tray down, Klein noticed a crutch leaning against the chair of the famous surgeon.

"Aaron, what's wrong?" he asked with concern.

The tall and thin man wore a pair of gold-rimmed glasses and had a cold appearance. He lightly patted his right leg and said, "No, don't mention it. It's really bad luck! I fell down the stairs and suffered rather serious fractures, so I could only fix it with a plaster."

"You really were unlucky." Klein sighed in agreement, cut a piece of foie gras, dipped it in sauce, and put it in his mouth. The fragrance that was emitted the moment they melted in his mouth stimulated all of his taste buds.

"I've been out of luck for a long time." Aaron nudged his spectacle frames and rubbed his temples in passing.

He then looked at Klein, then at Talim before asking hesitantly, "Mr. Moriarty, do you—do you…”

"What?" Klein looked up.

Aaron lowered his voice.

"You're a famous detective. You should know a lot of people, right?"

"It's quite alright," Klein didn't understand what Aaron was up to as he answered perfunctorily.

Aaron looked at Talim again and took a deep breath.

"Do you know anyone who's like a village witch doctor? No, I mean, some of the more capable fortune-tellers or mysticism enthusiasts. I think… I feel that my recent string of bad luck is too abnormal…

"I know it's likely to be a fake or a scam, but there's no other way of shirking my bad luck. I've tried to go to church, praying, donating, attending Mass, but it didn't work at all."

Capable fortune-teller and mysticism enthusiast… You seem to be talking about me… Klein pondered and said, "Aaron, tell us in detail about what happened to you."

By his side, Talim nodded as well.

"Don't worry, I may be a believer of the Lord, but I don't reject things regarding mysticism."

Aaron sighed in distress.

"There are a lot of things. For example, making mistakes at the operating table. Encountering an accident on the steam locomotive. I found that my house had been burgled when I returned home. When I went to the hospital, I ended up falling down the stairs… Do you think someone has cursed me?"

Yes, I've heard Aaron mention something like this before… Klein frowned slightly.

As a former Nighthawk, it was easy for him to associate this description with a Sealed Artifact: Misfortune Cloth Puppet!

Could it be a similar item? He activated his Spirit Vision and asked seriously, "Aaron, think back carefully. Before those unfortunate events began happening, one after another, did you or your family—yes, your family—encounter any unfortunate events?"

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CHAPTER 326 “PROFESSIONAL” SUGGESTION

Klein had wanted to ask if Aaron or his family had brought home anything which was relatively more unusual—such as a slightly dirty rag doll—before the unlucky events befell him.

But as soon as the words reached his mouth, he suddenly felt that it was too direct and could easily expose the fact that he knew a lot about mysticism. Although this could be explained away by the fact that he was experienced and knowledgeable, there was no need for him to take the risk.

Instead, he took a more roundabout approach and asked Dr. Aaron if his family had suffered the same ill luck.

Upon hearing his question, Aaron Ceres carefully recalled and said, "No, except for the steam locomotive accident that occurred to them as well, they were the same as before. Most of the time, they didn't experience anything especially lucky or unlucky. The rest can be said to be of both types, so they can't be considered especially unlucky."

That's not right… If it was an item that needs to be sealed like the Misfortune Cloth Puppet, it would definitely affect people within a certain range… Could it be that Aaron has dripped his blood on it, and the two of them have established a firm connection? In Klein's Spirit Vision, Aaron's aura and mood matched his physical and mental state, and there was nothing special about him.

He asked after some thought, "Is there any colleague at the hospital that is as unlucky as you?"

"No, so I think I must've been cursed by someone." Aaron pulled at his bow tie, looking anxious and uneasy.

Under Talim's curious gaze, Klein thought for a moment and said, "Before you became unlucky, did you encounter any relatively stranger matters, such as cutting yourself? In folklore, blood is the powerful medium through which curses can be formed."

"After I suspected that I was cursed, I have confirmed this point. I have not lost any blood in the past three months," Aaron replied with a heavy mood as he held his knife and fork.

*That's a little strange… I can't perform a more complicated divination in front of them… *Klein asked again, "Then, were there other strange matters?"

"Aaron, think back carefully. This kind of matter can't happen without a reason. Have you offended anyone recently? Or have you become an obstacle towards others?" Talim echoed with concern.

Aaron looked down at the food on the plate and fell into deep thought. Klein didn't stay idle either. He took care of his food before it turned cold and unpleasant.

By the time he started enjoying the dessert, Aaron finally raised his head and said, "I'm not a very sociable person. I don't have a good relationship with my colleagues, but it's hard to believe that they would come up with a way to curse me.

"Well… After your reminder, I do remember something. It might be related to mysticism."

"What is it?" Klein and Talim's spirits were lifted at the same time.

"Before my continuous bad luck streak, I was in charge of a patient, a child who wasn't even ten years old. He was very pitiful. Due to some complications, I had to amputate his left leg." Aaron nudged his glasses and recalled. "I just became a father not long ago, so I'm always filled with sympathy for the misfortune of a child. Every time I check the ward, I would chat with him, encourage him, and comfort him."

After a pause, Aaron's thoughts turned more fluid.

"I remember that it was the day before his surgery. I specially went to his ward to look for him, and he was really upset. He was playing tarot cards, which he had brought with him when he was admitted to the hospital. His family wasn't even allowed to take them away.

"In order to calm him down, I began playing tarot cards with him.

"Back then, I drew a card. It was the reversed Wheel of Fortune.

"That child looked at me and said with a pure and innocent smile, 'Doctor, your luck will get worse.'"

"Doctor, your luck will get worse…" Talim drew a breath and said, "Why do I feel that such a scene and such words make my body feel cold… Did the child die on the operating table?"

Aaron shook his head.

"That operation was a success. It didn't take long for him to be discharged from the hospital. He even specially thanked me.

"So, I've never suspected this, but now that I think back, I find that this is the only time in the past two months that I have come into contact with something related to mysticism. No matter what, regardless of whether it is useful or not, tarot cards are still used for divination."

At some point, a brass coin had appeared in Klein's hand. It was bouncing and rolling at his fingertips, seemingly symbolizing the analysis process of a "famous detective."

The coin was flicked up and fell into the palm of his hand. Klein glanced at it out of the corner of his eye and asked, having "ended" his thinking, "What's that boy's name? Where does he live?"

Aaron answered without hesitation, "His name is Will Auceptin. As for where he lives, I don't remember.

"What is your suggestion, Mr. Detective?

"Do you know any experts in the field of mysticism?"

Klein took a sip of his black tea and said with a smile under the expectant gazes of Aaron and Talim, "My suggestion is to go to the cathedral of the deity you believe in, tell the bishop about your recent misfortune, and then ask him if he has a solution. Aaron, I remember you were a believer of, uh —the Evernight Goddess, right?"

He had almost said Goddess, but fortunately, he remembered his identity as a detective who believed in the God of Steam and Machinery.

"However, my prayers to the Goddess, my participation in Mass, and the donation of money and items were all useless. I think I should find some capable fortune-tellers." Aaron didn't agree with Detective Moriarty's suggestion.

Talim echoed with a nod, "Yes, the deities wouldn't care if you were lucky or not. Luck is a blessing, and misfortune is a test."

Friend, your faith isn't pious enough. Be careful, the Lord of the Storms might zap you with a lightning bolt… Klein looked at the two separately and laughed.

"This suggestion is based on very simple logic.

"If—and I mean if—there exists useful and effective mysticism in this world, then the ones who are best at it are definitely the seven Orthodox Churches. If not, they would've long been replaced by other forces who have mastered mysticism.

"If there isn't such a thing as true mysticism, then finding a fortune-teller or witchdoctor won't be of any help. It would be better to see if there's a solution to this problem with the help of a relatively higher-ranking bishop."

Aaron carefully analyzed the situation and finally nodded.

"That makes sense.

"Perhaps I will need the bishop's help to pass on the message to the Goddess to protect me."

No, accurately speaking, with the bishop passing on the message, the Nighthawks would be able to notice the abnormality on you… Klein retorted inwardly.

He had no intention of helping Aaron himself, because to solve the problem regarding luck, aside from finding the root cause of everything, he would have to set up particular rituals.

Ignoring the fact that Klein didn't know any real luck enhancement rituals, and even if he did, he would be exposing his Beyonder powers to someone he was unfamiliar with, which would increase the risk for no reason.

Since I can get the Nighthawks to take up the role of helping you, there's no need for me to do it myself… I just don't know if the problem came from that boy or the tarot cards in his hands. If it's the latter, then it might be a suitable Sealed Artifact for me… Klein shook his head, suppressing his greed and emotions.

At this moment, Aaron had already made up his mind. He looked at Klein and grinned.

"Thank you, Mr. Moriarty. Although you don't know mysticism, you relied on strict logic to provide the best suggestion."

*Yes, I don't know mysticism… *Klein smiled.

"Just call me Sherlock, Aaron."

Yes, ever since I've stopped being a Nighthawk, the composition of my mysticism knowledge has become stranger and stranger. On the one hand, I've grasped quite a few secrets which are related to High-Sequences and deities, and on the other hand, I only understand the more basic ritualistic magic. Among the more complicated ones, I only know the sacrificial rites and bestowment rituals. As for charms, all I know are those three… Klein sighed to himself, feeling an urgent need for a more comprehensive and in-depth book of mysticism.

As for the knowledge required to separate a Beyonder characteristic from the spiritual corruption of an evil god, he had no clues whatsoever at the moment.

…

After a short afternoon nap at the club, Klein rode in a public carriage to the Rice Circus near the Tussock River in Cherwood Borough.

Today wasn't a holiday nor was it a weekend. There weren't many visitors at the circus, and the clowns that were responsible for entertaining and amusing the visitors all seemed listless.

Passing between the Divination Lodge and the tents that sold pies, pancakes, fruit pies, and alcoholic beverages, Klein walked along the edge of the circus and found a small theater. On the blackboard at the entrance, it

read: "Non-holiday and weekends: four performances a day, one hour per performance."

The first performance in the afternoon was at two o'clock. It had just begun.

After buying his ticket, Klein entered the theater and heard cheers.

At this moment, a beast trainer was on stage, holding a whip and ordering a black bear to perform in a charmingly naive manner. Next to him lay a tiger, with criss-crossed yellow-black stripes, and a seated dark and curly-haired baboon.

Pa!

The black bear rolled awkwardly as the trainer whipped it.

"I say, this guy wanted to give you a slap just a moment ago!" In the front row of the rows of seats, someone suddenly shouted loudly, which immediately attracted the laughter of a handful in the audience.

They thought it was a new way for the circus to amuse them.

However, Klein didn't think so, for he noticed that the color of the trainer's emotions leaned toward anger and annoyance.

He smiled and went to sit in the first row, watching the performance on the stage so as to not waste the price he paid for the tickets.

At that moment, the person who had just spoken shouted again, "That tiger wants to bite your neck off, that curly-haired baboon wants to use you as a cushion!"

Amidst the laughter of the audience, the beast trainer's actions clearly stiffened.

*This… Even though those words sound like they're causing trouble, why do I detect a hint of a warning… *Klein looked over his shoulder at the speaker in the same row and saw that he was a chubby-faced man in his thirties.

This tone, this way… It's kind of familiar… Klein mumbled silently to himself.

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CHAPTER 327
ENCOUNTER ON THE ROAD

Inside the small theater of the Rice Circus.

As long as something felt familiar, there was no problem for a Seer to recall it. Klein nudged his gold-rimmed glasses up on his nose, leaned back, and murmured something almost soundlessly.

Soon after, he pretended to close his eyes to rest for more than ten seconds. In reality, he had used the help of Cogitation to quickly fall asleep and be reminded through his dream.

It was a rather dim room, with only one candle flickering on the coffee table. The people sitting around it were all wearing black hooded robes and iron masks that covered only half their faces.

Deliberately massaging his glabella, Klein opened his eyes and continued watching the beast taming performance.

He had interpreted the revelation and knew the source of the familiarity: the scene in the dream was of the Beyonder gathering organized by Old Mister Eye of Wisdom.

There was also an Apothecary with a chubby face who enjoyed using sarcasm as a warning. Although he was clearly a kind-hearted fellow, he always gave others the feeling that he deserved a beating.

Could it be that Apothecary? That shouldn't be the case. When did he learn beast taming… According to the confidential records of the Nighthawks, an Apothecary doesn't have Spirit Vision like those of the Seer pathway who

were able to distinguish emotional colors in detail. Well, when it comes to the color of auras, they're actually quite good at it… Klein's thoughts slowly dispersed without affecting his appreciation of the performance onstage.

In his Spirit Vision, the emotional colors of the black bear, the tiger, and the curly-haired baboon were indeed unstable. If there was an addition level of provocation to a certain degree, they might very well rampage on the spot. This indirectly confirmed that the chubby man who had just spoken wasn't causing trouble. He seemed to be able to read the thoughts of the three animals and understand their impulses.

Having received the warnings, the beast trainer's face darkened with anger, but even so, his actions were instinctively gentler. He was more careful, and the show ended without a hitch.

After that, there was a simple but comedic skit. Only when it was over was it the magician's turn to perform.

This magician wore a tuxedo. He wore a bow tie of the same color, as well as a large top hat. The moment he appeared, he spat out fire from his mouth, which immediately caused the audience to applaud and cheer.

Such a simple trick… Klein, who had excellent eyesight and had watched quite a few magic lesson programs, understood the gist of it with just a quick glance.

Next, the magician performed: the classic escape act, releasing flying doves from his hat, pulling out flowers, card tricks, and so on. Klein thought he could easily see through every one of the magician's tricks, but he was surprised to discover that, at some point, he actually failed to do so because his attention had been drawn to where the magician wished it to be, causing him to ignore the key details.

He clearly doesn't have any Beyonder powers, but his technique is still able to fool my eyes. Hmm, the key point is grasping attention… The Magician's

second rule is fully divert a target's attention, thus achieving the desired effect? Klein made a guess in his mind which he wasn't sure if it was right or wrong.

It needed him to "act" it out to receive feedback.

At this moment, the magician's performance came to an end. The audience weren't stingy with their warm applause and cheers. The atmosphere in the theater reached its peak that afternoon.

Heh heh, the third rule. A Magician's performance requires the applause of the audience for his performance? Klein muttered to himself in a half-joking and half-guessing manner in silence.

Shortly after three o'clock, he pulled the collar of his black double-breasted frock coat and left the small theater. He didn't try to come into contact with the chubby man who was suspected to be the Apothecary and only secretly remembered his appearance—soliciting him suddenly might result in extreme reactions.

He took a tracked public carriage back to Minsk Street.

The carriage was divided into two floors and each of them had a few passengers. According to his usual practice, Klein chose the spot next to the window on the first floor.

The carriage proceeded and stopped from time to time. Klein, who had half-closed his eyes to recall the inspiration he had just had, suddenly felt his heart palpitate. He became sober and rational—the reaction was like someone had forcibly intruded into his dream or channeled his spirit.

At this moment, he clearly knew that he was no longer in the real world!

As someone rich with experience, he pretended to be unconcerned. He looked around and saw that the gentleman in a tuxedo and top hat to his left was still flipping through a newspaper. There were two children who were

being reprimanded by a vexed woman in a light blue dress for being disobedient troublemakers. Beside her, people were chewing on bread or drinking tea that they had brought with them… Everything was the same as before.

However, when Klein quietly activated his Spirit Vision, these passengers didn't emit any of the corresponding auras or emotions!

They don't have Ether Bodies!

They're clearly talking, eating bread, and reading newspapers, but none of them have any signs of life!

Is this an illusion, or did they just suddenly die and are just moving according to the inertia of their lives? Klein tried to remain calm as he looked out the window and saw carriages and pedestrians passing by. It was still an afternoon scene.

However, they also have no aura colors… As the carriage moved forward rather slowly, Klein became more and more serious, not understanding what had just happened.

He lowered his head and examined himself. He saw a clear spirituality luster which was completely different from the people around him.

At that moment, he suddenly heard an angry roar. It didn't sound like it came from a human!

Klein looked up and saw a large black dog on the street.

Its sharp white teeth were stained with traces of blood and rust. It was the huge Devil dog that had committed heinous crimes!

The black dog quickly swelled into a tall devil. It had bat-like wings on its back and goat horns, filled with mysterious patterns, that grew from its head. It looked up at the sky and said in the devil language, "Corruption!"

Almost as soon as it opened its mouth, Klein confirmed that it was real, because it possessed aura and emotion colors while strong spirituality lusters were being emitted from it!

Following the howls of the huge Devil dog, a few illusory pedestrians exploded and turned into a black mist that filled the air, blocking his line of sight.

However, Klein could vaguely see that there were quite a few "real people" with aura colors in midair and around him. They were using Beyonder powers which emitted spirituality lusters.

What's going on? Ordinary people are illusory, but the Beyonders are real… Have the Nighthawks and Mandated Punishers found the Devil dog and used a Sealed Artifact to create a battle environment which wouldn't disturb reality? That Sealed Artifact is only aimed at Beyonders, and it has no effect on normal people? Thus, I, who just happened to pass by, was pulled in out of bad luck? Klein's mind raced as he roughly guessed what had happened to him.

What a ridiculous disaster… Just as he was sighing with emotion, he suddenly heard a blood-curdling shriek, a blood-curdling scream, and a loud scream.

The black gas that screened his vision suddenly dispersed, and the gigantic Devil dog fell heavily onto the ground. Its body was divided into two halves, and all the light in the air converged on something, making it look like a clean, pure moon shining down on the dark environment.

The gigantic Devil dog tenaciously roared again, and its body suddenly exploded. Using its soul and flesh as fuel, it ignited blue and red flames that soared into the sky.

However, the flames lost all of their brightness as soon as they reached midair, having been absorbed by that bright and resplendent moon-like object.

It disappeared without a trace, and that huge Devil dog died so simply and completely, not even leaving a speck of it behind.

So powerful… As Klein was sighing, he suddenly thought of something. Would those official Beyonders discover that he—another wild Beyonder—was sitting in the carriage, different from the other illusory people in the surrounding area?

His heart tightened as his scalp went numb. He pulled out a paper figurine, and with a shake, he transformed it into himself, a copy that was without any aura or emotional colors.

As for him, with the help of the substitution spell, he hid in the paper figurine's "shadow."

At this moment, Klein heard a light snort from across the street.

The snort was clearly filled with anger and indignation.

Who is it? It doesn't seem like the sound an official Beyonder will make… Klein was puzzled, but he didn't dare to dispel his double and peek his head out to look.

Following which, a few pairs of eyes swept across the crowd, not stopping for even a moment.

When all this faded away, Klein saw that the void around him had cracked and shattered like glass.

Then the feeling of reality inundated him, and he knew he was back in the real world.

After removing the double, he sat back in his seat. The passengers in the carriage were doing their respective deeds—reading newspapers, chewing bread, and scolding children. It was no different from before.

But in Klein's vision, they had regained their aura and their emotional colors.

In addition, compared to earlier, the tracked carriage had clearly moved forward by quite a distance.

It seems like in that special battle environment earlier, time and space are synchronized with reality. If that battle had continued for a long time, then the carriage would've left the area of influence, leaving me alone there. Alone there… That would be an obvious exposure… Fortunately, Backlund is the Capital of Capitals and the Land of Hope. There are High-Sequence Beyonders from the three major Churches residing here… Klein thought with a lingering sense of fear.

He had originally thought that even if they had locked onto their target, it would still take the Nighthawks, Mandated Punishers, and others several days to find the black Devil dog. Moreover, that was on the premise that the dog hadn't left Backlund. That was something certain, because leaving Backlund would mean stepping out of the range of the ritual, and the advancement would fail. And to the Devil, the negative impact of a failed ritual would cause it, who was already struggling at the edge of bloodlust, to immediately lose control.

Who would've thought that just after one night and half a day, the gigantic Devil dog would be discovered, executed, and cleansed!

Terrifying! This is Backlund… This is the true power of the three Churches! A Sequence 6 Beyonder who's just about to advance was merely exposed and had left behind the tiniest of traces. Yet, he was quickly found and killed so easily… This is a Devil that can sense danger ahead of time! From the looks of it, some Sealed Artifact perfectly hinders this trait… In the future, I must be even more careful! Klein felt that he had learned a great lesson.

At this moment, he remembered the strange snort he had heard earlier.

It seemed to be the companion of that gigantic Devil dog? Its master? He was actually not discovered. Perhaps the final explosion of the gigantic Devil dog was secretly orchestrated by him… Of course, it's also possible that he's a member of some secret organization that is unsatisfied with the official Beyonders… Klein abruptly looked out the window on the opposite side of the carriage. All he saw were people walking past looking ordinary. They either wore tweed coats, half top hats, or bright long skirts. He couldn't tell if there was anything wrong with them.

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CHAPTER 328
HE THAT TOUCHES PITCH SHALL BE DEFILED

The wheels of the carriage pressed down on the track as the horses dragged it along. The heavy carriage steadily advanced, and soon, they were moving away from the street as though nothing had happened.

With a normal expression, Klein held onto his cane and waited until the tracked public carriage passed two stations before he got off ahead of time. He took a large detour and slowly headed back to the place where the gigantic Devil dog had been killed.

He wasn't looking for its Beyonder characteristics, as it was impossible for the top experts of the Church to not know about this matter. They would've definitely taken it away long ago. He also wasn't investigating the source of that slight snort. After all, with so much time having passed by, the carriages moving on the streets, and the people that were coming and going, how could there be any clues left behind? Even divination would fail to obtain an answer.

Klein's purpose was to look at the subtle details that remained along the street, and to see the nature of the Sealed Artifact that had created the strange environment for the battle, so as to prepare for what might happen in the future.

This is a Magician's acting… He sighed silently as he walked under the gray sky, along the edge of the street which was marked by the gas lamps.

The reason why he had to wait two stops before getting off and taking a detour, was because he was worried that there would be an official Beyonder who would sweep the battlefield in secret. He didn't want to meet them, so he tried his best not to.

Klein, who was dressed decently and holding onto a cane, took some time before he returned to the huge Devil dog's place of death. However, there were no traces of its presence on the street, and the passersby clearly didn't know that a fierce Beyonder battle had taken place here.

That Sealed Artifact is really magical. It's even more powerful than large-scale hypnosis. Klein activated his Spirit Vision and slowed his footsteps, like a gentleman on an outing rather than on an errand.

It took him over half an hour to complete his tour of the area, but his efforts with his Spirit Vision was futile. There was nothing out of the ordinary about his target area.

However, Klein's spiritual perception sensed one thing: its scope and its boundaries.

When I entered the block and left from another direction, I felt a subtle and illusory feeling, as if I entered a different world from another world. That is to say, the Sealed Artifact's scope of influence can reach at least one block, and its upper limit is temporarily unclear. Klein stood outside the target street, and nodded thoughtfully before returning. He went to a decent cafe, ordered a cup of Southville coffee, and sat down by the window.

As he drank the fluid with a rich aroma, he observed the street outside, which was beginning to bustle as time passed by, hoping to see any changes.

Unfortunately, what he had been looking forward to didn't happen.

Of course, he wasn't without gains. At the very least, he confirmed that a Magician "never performed unprepared," which was one of the rules of

acting.

He felt that the characteristics of the subtle precipitate in his body stirred a little.

In the evening, Klein stopped his observations and returned to Minsk Street in a public carriage.

At this moment, the gas lamps on both sides of the road had already been lit, illuminating the slightly wet cement ground with withered leaves that fell from the trees along the road with a blue hue.

Holding his cane, Klein strolled past the house of Lawyer Jurgen and strolled to Unit 15.

As he was walking, he suddenly thought of something. He had finished all the ingredients at home. If he went back now, he wouldn't be able to cook dinner!

*Uh, should I go to the meat shop and fruit shop, or find a restaurant to fill my stomach first? *Klein hesitated for a moment, he then finally decided to take a break tonight and eat something ready-made.

Many of the dishes in this world were made quite simply and very quickly, so it didn't become a situation where an hour was spent cooking for five minutes of eating. However, there was still a certain amount of work to be done. Furthermore, he had to wash the dishes and wash the knives and forks himself.

After touching his wallet, Klein turned around and walked in the direction of the area, where according to his memory, there were restaurants.

Once again he passed the house of Lawyer Jurgen's.

Standing behind the open oriel window and looking at the "confused" expression Detective Moriarty had, Jurgen raised his voice and said, "Mr.

Moriarty, did… I mean, did you forget your key again? Or did you drop your key?"

Why is he saying "again?" Klein replied with a chuckle, "No, not really."

Jurgen solemnly nodded his head.

"Then why don't you come to my place?

"You can return when it's completely dark after we have dinner."

…Klein hesitated for a second and smiled.

"It will be my honor."

When he entered, the black cat, Brody, was licking his paws in a corner. Jurgen didn't make much small talk as he stepped into the kitchen.

After Klein had hung up his coat and hat and put away his black cane, he stepped into the dining room and saw that the table was already covered with food—blackened steaks and mashed potatoes of the same color.

He wasn't surprised by this. This was how Mrs. Doris, Lawyer Jurgen's grandmother, cooked in her old age. The food didn't look appetizing, but they were delicious.

She's a good chef… Klein sat in front of Jurgen, smiled and made some small talk.

"Were you about to have dinner?"

"Yes, it's a habit of mine to look at the scenery outside before my meal. It allows my thoughts to spread without boundaries." Jurgen spread out his napkin and picked up his fork and knife.

Klein looked around in puzzlement and asked, "Where's Mrs. Doris?"

Jurgen sighed and replied seriously, "The weather is getting colder and colder. Her chronic lung problems are back, so she has no choice but to be admitted to the hospital for a while."

"May God bless her." Klein drew the triangular Sacred Emblem of the Church of the God of Steam and Machinery on his chest unfamiliarly.

Then he cut a piece of steak and forked it before stuffing it into his mouth.

At that moment, he suddenly thought of a problem and hurriedly asked, "So, you were the one who prepared dinner?"

"Of course. It was done a few minutes ago," Jurgen answered simply.

If it isn't the work of the great chef, Mrs. Doris, then this food… The corner of Klein's mouth twitched. He held back the fear in his heart and still bit down on the small piece of steak on his silver fork, slowly chewing on it.

His brows furrowed a little as he forcefully swallowed the food. He squeezed a smile as he asked, "Why did you prepare two servings in advance?"

"One serving was prepared to be taken to the hospital for my grandmother." Jurgen glanced up at Klein. "I'll make another one later."

"…So that's how it is." To be polite, Klein secretly took a deep breath and steeled himself as though prepared to do battle with the food in front of him and finish it.

By the time he was finished, Jurgen still had a tiny bit left. The senior solicitor put down his fork and knife, picked up the glass beside him, took a sip of red wine, and asked without expression, "How's it?

"Which dish do you like the most?

"I know there's still a large gap between my skills and my grandmother's, but it shouldn't be too exaggerated."

Mr. Lawyer, I suspect you have problems with your sense of taste besides facial myopathy… Can't you realize your standards? Klein smiled, moved his head from left to right, and said, "The white bread isn't bad."

"That was bought from Dodge bakery." Jurgen reburied his head and finished the rest of the food.

After drinking the remaining wine, he thought for a moment and said, "Detective Moriarty, I want to entrust you with a simple task."

"What is it?" Klein kept drinking water.

The mashed potatoes were too salty!

"My grandma's been in the hospital lately. I might not be able to return because of my cases. This will lead to Brody being hungry." Jurgen glanced at the black cat. "I want you to feed Brody when I'm not back, clean up his litter box, and play with him for a while. He loves to be scratched under the chin. Yes, every night at ten, if there's no light in the house and it's dark, you can come in, Two soli every time, until my grandmother comes home."

Klein saw the solemn and prim look on Jurgen's face. He smiled and said, "It's a simple task. The reward is quite generous. I have no reason to reject it."

As he spoke, he turned to look at Brody the black cat and smiled at it.

Brody slowly turned his body and faced Klein with his back.

Klein's smile couldn't help but freeze on his face.

…

After drinking his fill, Klein excused himself from Jurgen's place. He strolled back to his rented house in the completely dark streets.

By this time, the people who had finished their work had already returned home and were enjoying their dinner. There were very few pedestrians on the streets and not many carriages. It was very quiet.

Walking under the light of the gas lamp, Klein, who had no urgent desire to return, slowed down. So did the black shadow at his feet.

When he passed by the Sammers, he saw through the oriel window that the interior was brightly lit. People were moving back and forth, and sounds of chatter and laughing could be heard.

As for next door, 15 Minsk Street, it was dark and silent.

With a sigh, Klein quickened his pace, took out his key, and opened the door.

Before he went in, he checked the mailbox out of habit and found another letter lying inside.

Who sent it? Klein took out the letter and glanced at it under the light of the street lamp.

*No stamps… It looks like Isengard Stanton's handwriting… *He nodded slightly, went inside, closed the door, switched on the light, and opened the letter.

The great detective Isengard said in the letter:

“…I'm very pleased to inform you that the murderer has been found and killed on the spot.

"The police think that our work is worth at least half the bounty. They should be disbursing it to me this week. When that happens, I will invite

you and our other friends to come over and share this bounty."

…

*Isengard received the news so quickly? He sure has a close relationship with the Backlund police… Oh, it's without a stamp. That means that he got someone to deliver it directly. The Loen Kingdom's postal system isn't that efficient. How could a letter sent in the afternoon arrive in the evening? *Klein sighed, put down the letter, and got ready to change into a new outfit before heading out.

With the serial murders out of the way and the situation in Backlund easing, he could try to do a couple things.

For example, find Kaspars at the Bravehearts Bar and contact Maric to see if the Beyonder who could control zombies and Miss Sharron had any books regarding mysticism.

If my guess is right, they should be the defectors of the Rose School of Thought. They were previously in an official organization, and they must know a lot of mysticism knowledge. And now, I have enough money to buy them! Klein touched his wallet and thought in anticipation.

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CHAPTER 329
CLAW MARKS

Backlund Bridge area, Bravehearts Bar.

Klein pressed down the cap on his head, carefully protecting the wallet in the inside pocket of his grayish-blue worker's jacket. He walked around the customers who were surrounding the boxing ring and headed for the bar.

On the way, he looked around and didn't see the black market arms dealer, Kaspars Kalinin.

He's either playing cards or playing billiards… Klein nodded to himself, sat down at the bar, and said to the bartender, "Half and Half."

He had seen someone drink this type of alcoholic beverage the last time, and he felt that it likely suited his palate.

At least it's better than pure malt beer… Klein thought to himself.

The bartender raised his head and glanced at him.

"Which two alcohols do you want mixed? Different choices, different prices."

"The typical one; the typical one will do." The last time he saw someone drink it, the person had used alcohol of the worst quality. The whole glass of Half and Half was only worth two and a half pence.

"Four and a half pence." The bartender watched as Klein arranged the brass coins on the bar and then went back to mixing. He said in passing, "You

here for Kaspars? He's not here anymore; his business has been snatched."

"Huh?" Klein didn't expect such an answer.

Before the bartender could reply, a man with a protruded mouth next to him laughed and said, "Yes, we've chased Kaspars away!

"Heh, how can a lame old man like him do such a business?

"If you have anything you need, feel free to come to us. Find our boss."

A gang war? Klein subconsciously came up with this idea, wanting to reject the man's suggestion.

However, he soon thought of another possibility.

Could it be that the Rose School of Thought has deliberately sought out a gang to suppress Kaspars so as to force Maric and Miss Sharron to jump into a trap?

Yes, it's quite possible. Kaspars had been working here as a black market arms dealer for a long time; he's definitely not someone who can be chased away just like that. A while ago, because of the series of murders, the atmosphere in the whole of Backlund was rather tense, and the Rose School of Thought or other hidden factions wouldn't dare to recklessly kill and use spirit mediumship on Maric and Miss Sharron, even if they found them. This would result in a lot of bloodshed, and since they obviously only have a few suspects, and are unable to confirm anyone else having a way to contact Miss Sharron and Maric for the time being… Klein swallowed the words he was about to say and asked instead, "Can I first get a quote before deciding whether to purchase?"

He planned to observe the faction made up of ordinary people who had taken over Bravehearts Bar's black market. If he discovered any problems, then he could use them as a favor to give to Kaspars, Sharron, and Maric.

In any case, Klein didn't want any conflict. He only planned on observing via normal processes, so there was no risk.

"Yes, the only requirement is…" The man made a zipping motion with his hand in front of his protruding mouth.

"No problem." As soon as Klein answered, he saw the Half and Half in front of him, and the copper coins had been taken away by the bartender.

Without any intention of wasting it, he tipped his head and drank it. His brows gradually furrowed.

It's not what I thought it would be. The taste of the spirit is too heavy, the grape flavors are too mild… Klein put down his glass and followed the man to the third billiard room where Kaspars used to stay in.

When he was about to reach the door, he suddenly thought of something.

As someone who doesn't know much, even I can guess that this is a trap. I wonder if Miss Sharron and Maric who have been hunted for so long know about it? They definitely wouldn't appear…

However, Kaspars knows more than one Beyonder. He has connections with several different circles of Beyonders, and he might be able to get other helpers. That would complicate things.

At that moment, the man with the protruding mouth stopped at the doorway of the billiard room, and the distracted Klein almost bumped into him.

He pointed inside and said, "Don't talk nonsense later. Our boss doesn't have a good temper.

"Everyone in the Backlund Bridge area and East Borough knows this."

"Alright." Klein nodded.

Satisfied, the man with the protruding mouth turned and pushed open the billiard room's door.

As the door opened, Klein saw a figure hanging in the air, gently swaying.

It was a burly man with a full beard. There was a rope tied around his neck, a rope that was tied in a dead knot.

His feet were off the ground, the tip of his tongue was protruding out, and his face was purple. He wore a contorted expression.

"Boss…" the man with the protruding mouth cried out in disbelief.

As soon as the tension in Backlund's atmosphere disappears, someone takes action… Klein tilted his head and glanced at the subordinate, he then solemnly drew a triangular Sacred Emblem on his chest.

"May he find peace with God.

"I hope his temper is cured as a result."

The man with the protruded mouth didn't even hear what he said. He suddenly shouted, "Boss!

"Murder!

"Boss is dead!"

Klein took two steps back as a result of the loud and shrill voice, and he also activated his Spirit Vision to take a look inside the room. There was nothing special other than the scattered billiard balls all over the place.

Did a Beyonder from Kaspars do it? What would the faction who planted the trap do? If there was actually such a trap… Klein quietly moved away and slunk away into the crowd when the other gang members swarmed over.

He glanced at the kitchen of the Bravehearts Bar and, with some thought, went over and familiarly passed through to the back door.

As soon as he pushed open the not-so-heavy wooden door, Klein felt a cold wind blowing against him which caused him to shiver.

And amidst the cold wind was the faint smell of blood.

He listened for a moment but saw nothing. He took out his penny and flicked it up.

The landing sound was cut off by the wind, and Klein looked down at the copper penny in his palm, confirming that it was heads.

Putting the coin away, he carefully walked forward, heading in the direction that his spiritual perception told him to.

He walked to a dark corner where there wasn't any illumination from the street lamps. The smell of blood suddenly became stronger.

With the help of the weak moonlight that penetrated through the clouds, Klein almost gasped when he saw what was in front of him.

The floor here was littered with bloody thighs, calves, boots, ribs, a heart, arms, eyeballs, and other human parts. On the wall hung a portion of pale red intestines. The background was a large patch of bright red with milky white markings.

Seeing this, Klein felt like he was looking at a slaughterhouse, a slaughterhouse specially prepared for humans.

Is the murderer afraid that the Nighthawks, Mandated Punishers, and the others are too idle? This is so exaggerated that the police would immediately transfer the case to them… Klein muttered in his mind to resist the discomfort caused by the scene.

He walked around the blood and approached the opposite wall. To his surprise, there were quite a few deep scratches.

It was like a thick and sharp claw that forcefully scratched out a mark!

The claw is similar to the one the Devil dog had after its transformation. Could it be that there's another one? Could it not be dead yet? No, no, no, I know what's going on… Klein suddenly came to a realization.

The deceased must be the Beyonder who killed the bar's gang leader. He was finished off by the faction who had set the trap…

According to Little Sun's description, I've always suspected that the faction is the Rose School of Thought because they grasp the Prisoner pathway, which is also the mutant pathway.

And one type of mutant was the werewolf!

This was in line with the traces of the crime scene before him.

It also indirectly proves that Miss Sharron and Maric are defectors of the Rose School of Thought…

Klein calmly retreated out of the scene, one step at a time.

During this process, he confirmed that there weren't any Beyonder characteristics present. Of course, it was possible that it hadn't appeared yet.

Then he turned and walked towards another street, intending to get someone to inform the police, lest such a scene frighten the commoners and make them suspect that Backlund had been infiltrated by some ferocious beast.

Because he didn't want to get into trouble over greed, Klein didn't wait for the possibility of a Beyonder characteristic appearing.

Just as he reached the end of the alley, he suddenly saw a brown carriage slowly approaching in the night.

The carriage didn't continue to move forward like the other carriages. Instead, it stopped right in front of Klein!

Klein narrowed his eyes as he prepared to do battle. However, whether it was his spirituality intuition as a Seer or the battle sense of a Clown, neither of them gave him a warning.

At this moment, the window of the carriage was opened, revealing a pale face which wore a hint of madness to it. Its brown eyes seemed to conceal deep malice.

Maric… Klein recognized him.

It was Maric, Miss Sharron's companion who controlled zombies!

He was only wearing a white shirt and a black vest, and he didn't seem to be afraid of the cold at all. He gestured for Klein to board the carriage.

For a moment Klein hesitated, wanting to use his spirit pendulum to divine right there on the spot.

At this moment, a figure appeared behind Maric. She wore a complex black regal dress and a small, soft hat. It was the blonde Miss Sharron with blue eyes.

She can easily do me harm if she wants to. She can directly come out from the wall behind me… Klein thought for a moment, then he deliberately took two steps forward casually. He opened the carriage door and took note of it.

After he sat down, the carriage began to move slowly. It was unknown where its destination was.

"Why did you come here?" Sharron asked simply.

Klein answered frankly, "I wanted to contact the both of you and ask if you have any books on mysticism. It would be best if they went in-depth. As you know, I lack such knowledge."

Maric continued looking over with malice-filled eyes as he said in a slightly hoarse and low voice, "We do have a lot of knowledge regarding mysticism, such as Shaman King Klarman's Book of Secrets, but what can you use to trade for it?"

Shaman King? Which pathway and Sequence is that? As these thoughts flashed past his mind, Klein deliberated his tone and said, "I can trade for it with gold pounds.

"Or do you need anything else?"

The pale, but exquisite-looking Sharron looked at him and replied stoically, "Help.

"We'll use your help as barter."

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CHAPTER 330
SHARRON AND MARIC'S PHILOSOPHY

Help? Klein repeated the word silently and was momentarily a little stumped.

Back when Sharron had taken on the mission of protecting him for three days, it was mostly because of the money. For a Sequence 5 expert to be willing to take on such a mission was, in itself, a low probability. It could be chanced upon, but it wasn't something that could be forced. Furthermore, back then, Klein was desperately trying to save himself and was so frantic that he wasn't willing to give up any sliver of hope. As such, he still felt very grateful for being able to receive the help of such a powerful Beyonder, even if it was because of the money.

However, that was all. He wouldn't recklessly interfere in an unknown, dangerous situation in complete disregard of his own strength and circumstances for the sake of the other party.

Klein's original plan was that the mysticism knowledge from Little Sun could basically be verified as belonging to the pre-Cataclysm era. At that time, the ancient gods who wielded power and the current seven gods and evil gods didn't seem to have any overlap with each other, so it was possible that the two mysticism systems were definitely hugely different. So, even if he knew the details, he didn't dare to carelessly try it out. He had to receive indirect verification in order to know which ones could still be used and which ones didn't have any effect.

It was just like the sacrificial ritual from before. Klein had already figured out the procedure from The Sun, but he waited for Mr. Azik's reply before he dared to conduct the experiment. It was to prevent anything unexpected from happening.

As for The Hanged Man, he was at the rank of bishop or captain of the Church of the Lord of Storms, so he definitely possessed quite a bit of mysticism knowledge as well. However, the problem was that this was too orthodox and too involved with the Lord of Storm's domain; thereby, making it not necessarily suitable for Klein to use. Not all rituals could be performed by asking oneself for help, and he had to consider the spirituality burden he had to bear by praying to himself.

With these factors in mind, Klein turned his attention to the former members of a secret organization, Sharron and Maric. The knowledge they possessed was more suitable for wild Beyonders to use as a reference. There were also quite a few unorthodox and strange ones that were effective.

Of course, this wasn't to say that he would give up on exchanging information with The Sun and The Hanged Man. By having knowledge from ancient times, orthodox knowledge, and secret and unorthodox knowledge, it would result in him being more all-rounded, giving him a deeper understanding of mysticism!

And that was exactly what Klein wanted.

He had never forgotten that his ultimate goal was to return to Earth, so the more mysticism knowledge he had, the better. The more comprehensive, the better; the deeper the knowledge was, the better it was!

Of course, the premise of pursuing this goal is to get rid of Ince Zangwill, and avenge myself and the Captain… Klein looked at Sharron and Maric and said with the corners of his mouth curled up, "I need to know what kind of help you need from me before I can consider agreeing.

"I won't, nor is it possible for me to joke about my life."

Sharron, who was wearing a small black hat, nodded slightly and acknowledged Klein's words.

Maric, who was seated on the other side, leaned forward and put his fist to his mouth.

"We originally belonged to a rather old and secretive organization."

That I can guess… Klein maintained a serious and stoic expression.

"That organization took shape at the beginning of the Fifth Epoch, after the storms of the Berserk Sea cut off the Northern and Southern Continents, forming the Southern Continent's Highlands Kingdom and Paz Kingdom. However, I'm only talking about it taking shape. This organization's origins can be traced back to before the Fourth Epoch, all the way before the Cataclysm." the pale Maric continued describing.

That, I know that too. The Rose School of Thought, isn't it… It's traceable back to the time of the Mutant King… Klein wore an attentive look.

Maric scratched his slightly messy hair and said, "This organization believes in an evil god, and they believe that magic is a science and art that changes according to one's will to change things. This requires the establishment of a religious ritual system, including law and order. Yes, before the invasion of the Northern Continent, they were an orthodox organization in the Paz Valley and the Star Highlands, alongside the Church of the God of Death.

"At the same time, they believed that their wills originated from various desires. Combined with Beyonder powers, they were able to accomplish all sorts of unimaginable things.

"Because of these ideas, they retained an ancient and bloody tradition of primitive sacrifice, including the skinning of people and using the skulls of

children as ritual objects, letting a large number of believers fervently release all sorts of desires.

"We couldn't accept the cruelty of such deeds, and we also felt that it was very problematic in the way that they handle their desires, so we looked for an opportunity to escape from that organization.

Problematic in the way they handle their desires? Klein knew that the Rose School of Thought was famous for its bloody sacrifices, so he wasn't very curious about the former.

The blonde and black-dressed Sharron replied in an ethereal voice, "The way they do it is to indulge and burn.

"Our philosophy is to repress and show temperance."

So that's how it is… Klein suddenly thought of the description of the Prisoner Sequence. The body was the cage of the heart, and the world was the cage of the body. Madness was bound, and desire was suppressed.

If the Rose School of Thought did grasp the Mutant pathway of Prisoner, Miss Sharron's and Maric's philosophy is clearly more suited to the needs of the acting method. Why couldn't the other members notice this? That's not right… He frowned slightly.

Seeing his reaction, Maric thought he didn't understand and explained in a slightly hoarse voice, "They were influenced by that evil god, and they believe that indulging in their desires would help to strengthen their own willpower. When many people let their hair loose, they would also affect each other, adding to their fanaticism, allowing their condition to reach its peak.

"Our views are the exact opposite. We believe that desire must always be suppressed in one's heart, just like the flames and magma underground. Only at a crucial moment can it be unleashed, producing terrifying power."

Simply put, it's the difference between lust and abstinence… The influence that the evil god has is in contradiction to his own pathway's requirements. It feels like something is amiss… Klein thoughtfully asked, "So you escaped to Backlund, and now they're coming after you?

"Did the dead man in the alley end up involved in this?"

"We didn't get him involved. He got himself involved because of something else," Maric rebutted Klein's second guess, acquiescing to Klein's first question.

Then, why don't you just run away from Backlund? There are quite a few big cities along the border of the Loen Kingdom and Desi Bay. Furthermore, you can go to Intis, Feysac, Feynapotter, Lenburg, Masin, and other countries… In other words, you have a reason not to leave Backlund? What could it be? Klein thought for a moment and said, "Okay, I've got the general gist of it. Hmm, what kind of help do you need?

"My Sequence isn't high, and I don't know any powerful Beyonders. There's no way I can go against that secret organization directly."

After obtaining the potion formulas for Sequence 7, 6, and 5 of the Seer pathway and killing Lanevus, Klein actually didn't have to stay in Backlund.

There was still a huge gap between him and his next target of vengeance, Ince Zangwill who had Sealed Artifact 0-08. There was no hope of success within a short period of time. He didn't even dare to approach it, so it wasn't impossible to leave Backlund. At the very most, he would feel the pinch for wasting the rental fee that he had paid upfront.

The reason why Klein was still staying in this large city was because there were a lot of Beyonders here. There were also many resources and ingredients that appeared here. It made it one of the most convenient places to advance his Sequence. It suited the revelation of his divination back then.

When I become a Faceless and am almost done digesting it, I'll have to head out to sea and look for a mermaid… This thought suddenly flashed through Klein's mind.

Sharron replied calmly, "Be our support.

"To kill a Sequence 5 Beyonder, together."

Klein was slightly surprised as he asked, "With your strength, that organization only sent one Sequence 5 Beyonder to hunt you down?"

Could it be that the common characteristic of a cult was to be brainless?

"He has a Sealed Artifact that greatly restrains me," Sharron answered calmly, her face pale but her expression delicate. "The person in charge of this matter is indeed a High-Sequence Beyonder."

"But he has been led elsewhere by the clues that we deliberately left behind," Maric added. "It's not like we only have Backlund as our only base. If we can kill the person in charge of the nearby boroughs and take away that Sealed Artifact, we will immediately disguise ourselves and flee. After that, we will no longer be afraid of being hunted down normally."

Klein tersely acknowledged.

"But why do you think I can help?"

I look so weak…

And the target is a Sequence 5 Beyonder with power and that strange Sealed Artifact!

"You're not just at Sequence 9. You're also very special," Sharron looked at him silently with her blue eyes and said with certainty.

"Haha." Klein could only reply with a dry laugh.

Sharron's ethereal voice sounded once again.

"Besides, you still have that 'eye.'"

*That eye? Are you referring to the All-Black Eye left behind by Nimblewright Master Rosago? *Klein nodded slightly.

"But I can only use a small portion of it, and it can't produce too much of an effect since it was corrupted by the True Creator."

"That's enough." Sharron was always so terse with her words.

Maric added, "The Sequence 5 Beyonder we are dealing with has similar characteristics as Sharron. Only that 'eye' of yours can help us find him."

At that moment, Sharron spoke again.

"Maric will be the first bait.

"I'll be the second.

"As for you, you are the hunter responsible for solving the problem.

"I can't guarantee absolute safety.

"But you will definitely be safer than us."

Sounds sincere enough, but I'll need to make sure through divination… Klein pondered for a few seconds and said, "I want to understand the situation about the other person's characteristics and Sealed Artifact. Only then can I make a decision."

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CHAPTER 331
THE ACCURSED

Dressed in a black regal dress, Sharron pursed her bloodless lips and tilted her head to look at Maric, nodding slightly.

Maric clasped his hands and said while concealing some of his madness, "You know about the Prisoner pathway, don't you?"

"Yes, I've heard of it in the Beyonder circles," Klein answered frankly.

Of course, these Beyonder circles refer to the Nighthawks and the Tarot Club… He sighed in his heart as he added.

Maric seemed to recall something, and he was silent for nearly twenty seconds. Outside the window, he could hear the rhythmic sound of the carriage wheels rolling across the concrete pavement.

He ruffled his messy brown hair and spoke with a slightly twisted expression on his face.

"Prisoners are those who are locked up in prisons, and that also corresponds to having their spirituality and desires constrained by reason, body, and the world. The Beyonders of this Sequence have strong bodies and keen senses, often possessing both a staid appearance and a crazy heart within them. They possess many criminal techniques and are proficient in killing with whatever they can casually acquire.

"Their corresponding Sequence 8 is Lunatic. I believe you aren't aware of this because even an orthodox Beyonder organization like the seven Orthodox Churches aren't fully aware of such matters. That secret

organization's member wields powers that far exceed your imagination. Those nearly twisted bastards are bound, be it their bodies or souls. It would be difficult to obtain any useful information by just relying on mediumship and divination.

"Sharron and I had also put up with this and waited for a very long time before we found a way to remove this binding and successfully escape.

"As all the Beyonders in this pathway are cursed and have crazy characteristics, we don't want to rely on the seven major Churches. We would lose all our freedom, without leaving anything behind."

So that's the case… It's no wonder the Nighthawk's confidential information doesn't have much about this. It even lacked the corresponding Sequences 8 and 7 of Prisoner. It's something I could know based on the level I had at the time… Klein replied with a sense of enlightenment, "I really am not aware of the situation beyond Prisoner."

Maric didn't nod as he looked at Klein with his brown eyes and continued, "Compared to a Prisoner, a Lunatic's greatest characteristic is to be able to autonomously sacrifice their rationality and let their desires run amok in exchange for strength and enhancements in every aspect. Apart from not having clear thoughts during this period, there isn't much of a problem. They can even gain stronger resistances towards Beyonder powers that can disrupt one's thoughts and influence their mind."

To put it simply, I'll get rid of you first, and that will make it impossible for you to kill me… Klein couldn't help but lampoon.

"From this Sequence onwards, the curse will gradually appear. Lunatics easily lose control," Maric said as his facial muscles twitched.

Isn't that obvious? If a person's mental state has been operating at a nadir for a long time, or if there are frequent abnormalities, it would be abnormal if the possibility of losing control isn't higher than other Beyonders! Klein had his own understanding of this. He turned to look at Miss Sharron,

feeling that it was hard for him to imagine what she would look like when she was in the Prisoner and Lunatic stages. And throughout this, Sharron maintained her ghostly silent and ethereal state.

Seeing that he hadn't said anything, Maric slowly exhaled and said, "The next sequence is Werewolf."

The mutation begins? However, in the eyes of normal people, the crazy Prisoners and the Lunatics who are prone to losing their minds are actually similar to such mutants… Well, Werewolf being a Sequence 7 is lower than I expected… Klein's thoughts suddenly wandered.

Maric didn't notice how he had gone adrift as he continued on, "A Werewolf is a fully cursed person. Every time the crimson moon becomes full, they will lose part of their sanity, grow black fur, and their bloodlust and desire for tasting blood would reach its peak…"

His voice gradually became a bit erratic, as if he recalled that bitter experience of enduring and repressing himself.

"A Werewolf has rather powerful rejuvenation abilities, as well as terrifying strength, agility, and speed. Their claws and teeth are in no way inferior to Beyonder weapons of the same Sequence, and they contain venom. They also know some darkness-related spells. For instance, targets who are under the Werewolf's control would become subordinates after a period of time, when a Werewolf's venom infiltrates their body for a period of time. They would become a monster like a Werewolf, and typically, these monster's possess very short lifespans…"

After hearing Maric's explanation, Klein made a pertinent conclusion.

At the level of Sequence 7, the Werewolf is above average in terms of actual combat ability.

"A Werewolf who is always unable to suppress their instinct to kill and their bloodlust during a full moon will turn increasingly cold and more twisted.

Gradually, they will lose their feelings that a normal human would have," Maric added. There was an undisguised pride in his tone.

It fits Mr. Azik's description of mutants… Klein subconsciously looked at Miss Sharron, instinctively imagining her Werewolf form. However, her cold gaze almost made him shiver, and he quickly turned his head back.

Maric unconsciously licked his lips. It wasn't the seductive kind done by women, but the kind that gave people a sense of danger.

His gaze seemed to momentarily lose focus; leaving his recollections an unknown.

After a few seconds, he opened his mouth again.

"I'm at the corresponding Sequence 6, Zombie."

Zombie… Your outer appearance really does resemble one… It's no wonder you often play cards with a bunch of your own kind. It turns out that you are also a special kind of zombie, a real living zombie… Klein thought for a moment and said, "I heard from Kaspars that you aren't afraid of bullets?"

Maric nodded and said, "My body can be as hard as steel. Even if you used a revolver to fire at my head, I'll only feel dizzy at best. You'll need to shoot me five times in the same spot before you're able to break my defenses.

"And even if you break through my defenses, to a Zombie, all other forms of damage isn't lethal if the brain isn't destroyed.

"And my strength has been raised significantly from the foundation of a Werewolf. Furthermore, I wield a portion of death-related spells and can easily summon zombies and control ghosts. I can direct them and am proficient at using cold and decaying Beyonder powers."

Every Sequence in the Mutant pathway has different characteristics. There are very few changes in the progressive pathway… Klein pondered for a

moment and asked, "Then, what about the curse of Zombie?"

Maric clenched his teeth and said, "I will thirst for the warm blood and fresh meat of humans. During the full moon, this state will be particularly serious. The only thing to be gratified about is that a Zombie's curse replaces the Werewolf's and Lunatic's curse. They do not exist together, and it's the same later on.

"Every time the crimson moon is full, I will be in great pain. If I don't give up on self-control, I will be in so much pain that I will lose my ability to fight. And if I indulge myself, I will also become less and less like a human, and the risk of losing control is very high.

"Even in normal times, I would always resist the desires in my heart and the strong malice in my heart."

Phew. Compared to the Beyonders of other Sequences, the others are so much better. Well, except for Abyss and Demoness… Klein suddenly had such a thought.

Maric paused and glanced at Sharron.

Sharron parted her lips and said in an illusory voice, "Sequence 5, Wraith."

Wraith? There's such a Sequence? It really is a Mutant pathway… Klein was slightly surprised at first, but then he felt that this was indeed the characteristic of a spirit body that could be easily transformed.

Having received the prompt, Maric added, "After becoming a Wraith, one can turn one's body into a real wraith and obtain the corresponding powers, such as moving through obstacles, hiding in mirrors, and directly attacking the soul of the enemy. They can jump through most things with reflections.

"And unlike ordinary wraiths, even with Spirit Vision, one will find it difficult to discover such a shadow unless they were a High-Sequence Beyonder.

"Yes, Wraith wields many death-type spells. There are many strange techniques, such as forcefully possessing the body and controlling the enemy…

"Her curse is that on the night of a full moon, she either consumes a certain number of human souls, or she becomes extremely weak. Choosing the former is equivalent to being on the brink of losing control at any moment."

Without waiting for Klein to speak, the similarly pale Sharron suddenly said, "Our target is also a Wraith."

"The Beyonder powers of Zombie, Werewolf, Lunatic, and Prisoner won't be lost as a result of advancement," Maric emphasized.

*It sounds like my nemesis. I'm precisely afraid of the type who are impervious to revolver bullets and do not suffer immense damage when burned by ordinary flames… Simply put, I'm afraid of "ghosts"…*Klein felt his heart thump a little.

After pondering for a few seconds, he asked, "What is the effect of the Sealed Artifact?

"Why would they restrain you?"

It actually made you willing to tell me your weaknesses and your curses… Klein had some general guesses.

Maric's expression was somewhat gloomy as he replied, "That cursed artifact that needs to be sealed is called 'Scarlet Lunar Corona.'

"Up to a certain range, it can create effects similar to a full moon. For those who are already cold and warped, it would aid them with explosive strength, but we will become weak and lose our ability to fight. If I give up on myself, then I'd rather choose death!" Maric growled hoarsely.

I didn't expect a perverted and cowardly fellow like you to be a persistent person. Hmm, to be able to last until the Zombie Sequence is indeed extraordinary… Klein didn't interrupt him and listened to the next part of the story.

"The person who wears the Scarlet Lunar Corona is immune to the effects of the full moon, and they will gain terrifying speed and unimaginable rejuvenation abilities, as well as a number of relatively powerful darkness-related spells. However, it will make the wearer's blood gradually turn cold. They will freeze up, bit by bit, and if they do not stop in time or drink the blood of a living person, they will ultimately die as their blood freezes up completely." Maric seemed to greatly fear the Scarlet Lunar Crow.

After he was done, Sharron looked over at Klein with her calm blue eyes.

"Together with Steve are Zombie Jason and Werewolf Tyre.

"But as long as Steve is finished off, the others wouldn't be a problem."

Maric added, "If we succeed, the Beyonder characteristic left behind by Steve will be mine. The Scarlet Lunar Corona will belong to Sharron. The remaining spoils of war and the Book of Secrets will be your payment."

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CHAPTER 332
NOTARY CERTIFICATE

Very generous conditions… Klein almost couldn't believe his ears.

Although the most valuable items are the Sequence 5 Beyonder characteristic and the powerful Sealed Artifact with special powers, the rest aren't too bad either!

It's impossible for a Sequence 5 powerhouse to only have Sealed Artifacts provided by the organization, and if any one of the Sequence 6 Zombie and Sequence 7 Werewolf is retained, it will be a bountiful harvest!

Klein leaned back and pretended to think, to suppress the sudden greed in his heart.

"Your conditions are indeed satisfying," he replied and immediately returned with a question. "Who is Shaman King Klarman? What kind of information is recorded in his Book of Secrets?"

Maric rubbed his temples and said, "The Shaman King can both refer to a High-Sequence job and also represent an outstanding person who controls powers in the domains of darkness, the moon, and the strange, one who surpasses his peers. Klarman is the latter, and also the former.

"He was active in the Southern Continent during the early part of the Fifth Epoch, and then he completely disappeared. Maybe he was hunted down by the Church of Death or our secret organization, or maybe he died of old age in some unknown place.

"His Book of Secrets includes knowledge such as secret contracts, rituals, alchemy, astrology, symbolism, natural interaction, and so on. Even if an ordinary person gets it, they can become an expert in the field of mysticism. They can even rely on their own natural spirituality to accomplish a small number of Beyonder matters without taking any potions. Well, the price is that they will slowly become mentally ill. This is the aftermath of one's spirituality being unable to bear the burden."

Sounds good… Just what I need… However, this mission is not only difficult in itself, but there's also a certain amount of subsequent trouble. I'm dealing with a secret organization with a history of over a thousand years… Klein was silent for a few seconds, but he still chose to follow his heart.

"I wish to have some time to think it over.

"This is a very serious and dangerous matter. I can't be impulsive.

"I will give you my answer tomorrow morning at nine o'clock. Hmm, come to my house. You know the address."

He looked at Sharron while finishing the sentence. He suddenly felt nervous when he finished it.

They had revealed so much important secret information, even problems that plagued them. If he didn't agree on the spot, would he be silenced?

Or would they follow me until I make up my mind?

Then, how can I go above the gray fog to make the divination!?

Sharron, who was wearing a black regal dress, looked at Klein quietly. There was no anger, doubt, or emotion in her blue eyes.

She suddenly pulled out a folded piece of paper from a concealed pocket and unfolded it into a rectangle.

The paper was orange-yellow, with many symbols, including those representing the sun.

These symbols and labels drew out an empty zone, one which gave off a very warm and stable feeling.

As soon as he saw the piece of paper, Klein remembered what it was and relieved his uptight heart.

This was also from Numblewright Master Rosago. This was the Notary Certificate!

Back when they were distributing the spoils of war, Sharron had taken this mystical item!

The pale, delicate Sharron handed the Notary Certificate to Klein and said in a refined voice, "Press your hand here.

"Promise not to divulge what you just heard."

Phew… Klein exhaled and nodded seriously.

"Alright."

According to the prompt, he took the Notary Certificate and pressed his palm against the blank area. Then, after some deliberation, he opened his mouth and said, "I promise I won't tell anyone what I just learned from Miss Sharron and Mr. Maric."

As he said each word, the symbols and magical labels around the Notary Certificate lit up, one by one, giving off a warm and bright glow.

When it was all over, the light turned into a seal-like image that pressed down on Klein's palm and even passed through it, covering the blank zone.

A warm current passed through him, and Klein felt a subtle but invisible connection between himself and the Notary Certificate.

Back then, the ability mimicked by Old Mister Eye of Wisdom really does belong to a Notary… He suddenly thought of something from before.

"I'm done." Klein returned the Notary Certificate.

Sharron calmly nodded her head and didn't say anything else. Her indifferent figure quickly disappeared from the carriage.

Maric, still suppressing the malice in his eyes, tapped the carriage's wall with his finger.

The carriage slowly stopped, and the door of the carriage opened.

They're using zombies to drive the carriage and shadows to act as attendants… It really is Maric's style… After activating his Spirit Vision, Klein took off his cap in enlightenment, pressed it to his chest, bowed slightly, and got off the carriage.

It was a quiet street, one where several of the street lamps were broken, but no one had fixed them.

Klein first went to his one-room apartment in East Borough before returning to 15 Minsk Street and pretended to make two divinations in the living room.

The first time was whether or not he should accept this commission. The second time was whether or not it was dangerous, and how dangerous it was.

As for the answer to the divination, he didn't pay close attention to it, because Wraiths of the Mutant pathway could transform into spirit bodies, allowing them to directly interact with the spirit world to obtain information. In other words, they naturally possessed the power of

divination and anti-divination, so regardless of whether it was Sharron or the target Steve, the revelation that Klein received was either wrong or deviated.

After he finished his divination, he read the newspapers and books, as he usually did. He practiced his Beyonder powers in the activity room, then he washed up and went to sleep. There was nothing abnormal about it.

At ten past four in the morning, Klein suddenly woke up and jumped out of bed!

He found a candle, built a wall of spirituality, and quietly began the ritual of summoning himself!

Then, he took four steps counterclockwise and went above the gray fog, but he was in no hurry to respond to the prayer.

Sitting in the high back chair belonging to The Fool, Klein focused on the surface of the long bronze table. He saw the All-Black Eye, Azik's copper whistle, the Dark Emperor card, and the dark, majestic figure of Roselle holding a scepter.

The corner of his mouth twitched, and Klein stretched out his right hand to turn the Card of Blasphemy upside down.

What I can't see can't hurt me!

After conjuring a pen and paper, he took off his topaz pendulum and repeated his first two divinations.

The result of the first divination rotated clockwise at an adequate frequency. That was to say that the commission should be accepted, but it also wasn't necessary.

The result of the second divination was the counterclockwise rotation of the topaz pendulum, but it spun with great amplitude and frequency. Klein's

interpretation was that there was danger, quite considerable danger, but it wasn't life-threatening yet as long as it was properly dealt with.

Phew… After remaining silent for a few seconds, Klein remembered a hunch from before.

Perhaps, every Magician needs to perform.

Otherwise, the name of the potion would be "Mage," not "Magician."

The key to "never perform unprepared" is to be prepared, as well as to perform… And this may not just be in combat… The two assumptions of "diverting the enemy's attention" and "getting the applause of the audience" is predicated on there being a performance… As long as I can find the appropriate solution, disguise myself well, and deal with it perfectly, it will be hard for the Rose School of Thought to find me… Many thoughts flashed through Klein's mind.

Combined with the revelation he had just received from the divination, he quickly came to a decision. Leaning back against The Fool's high back chair, he raised his head to look at the towering ancient palace and the boundless gray fog and revealed a slight smile.

Then, let's have a grand performance.

With that, he took the All-Black Eye and Azik's copper whistle and responded to his own prayers.

The next morning was a Thursday morning.

Klein, who had bought the ingredients early, prepared homemade Feynapotter noodles, which was closer to the noodles mixed with meat sauce. He went to the door to take out today's newspaper from the mailbox.

As he ate, he found a notice of a Beyonder gathering in the Backlund Morning Post.

*As expected, once the tense situation is resolved, the gatherings begin… *Klein smiled and said to himself.

At nine o'clock, he took out his golden pocket watch, opened it, and took a look. Then, he faced the empty living room and said to the oriel window, "I'm willing to provide help.

"The conditions are exactly as you said.

"But that's only if you give me a few more days."

He paused for a moment before replying with a smile, "I need to make some preparations."

Other than Klein, there was no one else in the living room, but suddenly, an illusionary voice rang out.

"Okay.

"After you've finished preparing, you can pay the bar a visit."

…

In Viscount Glaint's study, Audrey was sitting in a chair, helping Susie straighten the fur on the back of her head. She said to Fors and Xio, who were sitting quietly beside her while sipping their wine, "Why were you in such a hurry to bring me here?"

Although this was the first time she had seen Fors and Xio since the incident with Lanevus, she had already paid them through Susie.

Well, after joining us at the Tarot Club, Fors seems to remain unchanged. She's still languid and fond of being snide with Xio, but there are some things about her that are completely different. She used to be dispirited, depressed, and she seemed to hold little hope for the future, but now, that

aspect has completely disappeared… Audrey, the Telepathist, smiled faintly and observed the state of Miss Magician with a calm heart.

After downing the rest of the red wine, Fors said, "It is indeed Aurmir, the most famous red wine. It's much better than the ones I've drunk before. The level is very clear and each level has a different feeling."

She put down her wine cup and said, "The gathering that might have the Spectator and clues to the Psychology Alchemists will be held this afternoon."

"Is that so? Why the rush?" Audrey asked, puzzled.

Fors explained with a smile, "Because the serial killer has wasted too much of everyone's time. Moreover, that's the outskirts of North Borough. It's during the afternoon when the Nighthawks are most relaxed."

"Okay." Audrey nodded lightly and didn't ask any further.

At the same time, her gaze swept across the room, and she sighed silently.

Compared to the past, Xio is a lot quieter compared to the present Fors.

At that moment, Viscount Glaint chuckled and said, "Audrey, I will go with you."

"Why?" Audrey asked despite knowing the answer.

Glaint cleared his throat and said, "It's because I've already obtained the Apothecary formula. All I need to do is trade for some ingredients. My vault doesn't have the two corresponding ingredients.

"Oh, Fors sold it to me. 300 pounds. She guarantees that it's authentic."

300 pounds… I remember that you bought it from Mr. World for only 230 pounds… Audrey couldn't help but glance at Fors.

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CHAPTER 333
THE TRACKER

In the suburbs of North Borough, in a soon-to-be-abandoned three-story medical school building.

Even at three o'clock in the afternoon, the fog and the clouds had already darkened the whole of Backlund, as if a storm was approaching.

Along the dilapidated corridor, the gloomy light shone in diagonally, penetrating the windows and causing everything to appear silent and scarred. It was eerie and terrifying.

This was Audrey's second time here, and she was no longer as nervous and tense as before. She turned her head left and right in her surgical cap and big mask, habitually observing the environment, observing every detail of this place.

Viscount Glaint was walking beside her and gradually turned apprehensive. He couldn't help but whisper, "Why do I find that this place is a little strange…

"Could there be evil ghosts?"

As a mysticism enthusiast who had only half a foot in the Beyonder circle, the only Beyonder phenomenon he had witnessed was Fors's passing through walls and the opening of a door. He was still unsure of the existence of wraiths and shadows.

However, this didn't stop him from being afraid of similar monsters!

Fors turned her head and shot him a glance as she held back her laughter.

"Most of the participants of this gathering are Beyonders. If there really are evil ghosts or spirits, they would definitely be very happy. It usually implies ingredients or servants."

Noticing that Viscount Glaint was obviously relieved, she purposely added, "Of course, I'm only talking about the weaker kind of ghosts. A truly formed shadow might be able to kill everyone here without making a sound. And even if you run, all you can do is run back and forth between the three stories without being able to leave. It's like entering a maze."

Xio nodded in approval.

"I've once encountered a similar wraith. I ran in circles while in the cemetery without any means of escaping. During this process, there were baffled people who would turn their heads for no reason, only to suffer a sudden death. If not for one of the Beyonders carrying a sun charm, perhaps you wouldn't be seeing me here today."

Viscount Glaint shivered as he looked out the window. At this moment, a withered tree branch hit the glass and made a light sound as it was blown by the cold wind.

Glaint almost shouted out loud, as he frantically inched towards the two Beyonders, Fors and Xio.

Audrey resisted smiling and quietly watched this scene from the sidelines. In her heart, she thought, *I have met Mr. Fool who is close to a deity. I know the City of Silver in the Forsaken Land of the Gods, I have heard of all kinds of terrifying monsters in the depths of the darkness. Why would I fear wraiths and shadows?*

However… I really haven't met a ghost yet. Pui! Audrey, what are you thinking? It's better not to come across this kind of thing!

Unless I become a Psychiatrist with Beyonder powers capable of influencing other creatures, or if I obtain mystical items that can restrain ghosts and monsters…

The four of them couldn't help but increase their pace and quickly arrived at the gathering venue for the day.

Before she entered, Fors found an opportunity to bend her back and whisper into Xio's ear, "You did well cooperating with me just now. You actually made up a story so quickly that's enough to frighten others.

"Look at the spots which aren't covered by Viscount Glaint's mask. It's so white that you can't see any colors."

Xio turned her head as she answered blankly, "I didn't make up the story.

"That was something that happened to me before I came to Backlund."

"…” Fors was stunned for a moment before she blurted out a question, "For real?"

"Why would I lie?" Xio's puzzled face was obscured by the mask.

Fors turned her head and took two steps forward and suddenly shivered.

At that moment, Glaint didn't wish to stay in the creepy corridor any longer. He reached out his hand and pushed open the door to the gathering venue.

As the creaking sound echoed, he saw the concrete floor and the smell of antiseptic coming into his nose. It made him frown.

Soon after, he saw a large pool in the middle. It was filled with a clear, yellow liquid, and there were floating figures inside it.

Some of the figures were entirely naked. Some were rather complete while others had half their skin ripped off. They had the brownish auburn colors

of beef jerky.

They were corpses!

"Ah!"

A man's shrill cry resounded in the room.

Gazes were instantly cast onto Glaint.

These gazes were all from the figures in white coats surrounding the pool. They were also wearing surgical caps and huge masks, and only their eyes and a bit of their skin were exposed.

Glaint's body swayed a bit. He wanted to turn around and run away, but when he saw Audrey, Fors, and Xio pass him, as if nothing had happened, in order to enter his room, he realized that they were pretending that they weren't his companions.

As he took a deep breath, Glaint nearly vomited.

He looked outside and saw that the corridor was dark and gloomy, filled with shadows, and that there wasn't a single living soul in sight.

With another shudder, Glaint hastened his steps and caught up with Audrey and the others, finding a place to sit down as far as possible from the pool.

After a few minutes, a figure wearing a white coat stepped out of the line and used a wooden pole with a hook on the side to pull a corpse to the side. Then, he directly dragged the corpse to the concrete floor.

He paused for about three seconds, took out a scalpel, and slit open the body's abdomen.

As the gash deepened, a cold and hoarse voice suddenly sounded from inside.

"Let the gathering begin."

…Glaint reached out with his hand to press down his mask. His throat moved a few times and he almost vomited.

They were midway in the gathering with all kinds of trades—either a success or failure—happening, Audrey, who had been calmly observing all this time, finally opened her mouth and said, "I want the Spectator potion formula."

Before she could finish her sentence, she felt several gazes sweep over her. However, they quickly moved away and didn't linger for long.

After several seconds of silence, the transaction was aborted.

…

Around four in the afternoon, it was getting closer to night.

"Why was there nothing at all…" Glaint didn't maintain his aristocratic demeanor as he slumped against the wooden wall of the carriage and sighed.

This Beyonder gathering had left a deep impression on him, making him feel as if he had taken a huge risk.

But even so, he was still unable to buy the horn of an adult Flying Unicorn and the venom crystal of a Royal Jellyfish.

Fors secretly pursed his lips and said, "That's normal. Although Backlund is the easiest place to get ingredients, if you can't join every Beyonder gathering, there will still be situations in which you won't be able to find what you want for a long time. It requires either luck or patience."

"Mister Viscount, think about Miss Audrey's Spectator potion. She hasn't received any clues to date."

Sometimes, you can encounter the ingredients, but you would lack the money to buy them… Xio, who was sitting to the side, thought in exasperation.

Audrey consoled Glaint, "When I get back, I'll go to my family's vault and do a search. Maybe there's something you want."

She had brought the Rainbow Salamander's pituitary gland with her today, but she hadn't encountered the spinal fluid of a Farsman Rabbit. Therefore, she had only exchanged it for 320 pounds in cash. It was to prepare for Susie's advancement.

Glaint nodded, and just as he was about to open his mouth, he saw Xio sitting up straight. She frowned and said, "It seems like someone is following us!"

"I trust your intuition. What do we do now?" Fors asked, looking around.

Following us? Why follow us? All we did was sell one Beyonder item and obtain a few hundred pounds in cash. Even if someone wanted to rob us, we shouldn't be the top targets… Although Glaint acted like a rookie, we didn't… In addition, the gathering's organizer had done a lot of things to ensure the safety of the members and to prevent anyone from being followed. Unless… the person who sent the tracker is the organizer! Last time, everything seemed normal. Hmm, what's the difference between the two occasions… Audrey's mind raced when she suddenly came up with an idea.

Perhaps it was my request to purchase the Spectator formula that attracted the attention of the Psychology Alchemists.

It's impossible for them to randomly sell the Spectator formula, so what would inevitably follow is recruitment into the organization.

And recruitment isn't a simple matter. One has to be wary of any quasi-Nighthawks or quasi-Mandated Punishers, or spies sent by other hidden

factions.

If they don't observe the target and conduct an investigation, the organization would quickly be destroyed!

After pondering for a few seconds, Audrey said to Fors and the others, "Prepare to be attacked.

"Pretend as though you didn't notice the tracker.

"If we can successfully return to Empress Borough, don't worry about exposing the identities of Glaint and me. Both of you have to leave in secret."

Her green eyes swept over Glaint and she added with a smile, "A lot of people know that we are mysticism enthusiasts, so it's normal for us to find an opportunity to participate in a Beyonder gathering. Even if the tracker is an official Beyonder, they won't suspect anything. We are just regular people, so all they will do is warn us through other channels."

But I'm already at Sequence 8… Phew, in order to come into contact with the Psychology Alchemists, I have to take a little risk… It's likely the official Beyonders won't target me for seeking to purchase a formula. They shouldn't be able to bypass the gathering organizer and track us down. I want to believe in my own judgment! Audrey cheered herself on.

"Okay," Viscount Glaint mumbled as he agreed.

The horse carriage continued on as usual, going in circles a few times. In the end, Audrey and the others changed to another carriage as they had planned.

Throughout this process, the tracker never attacked.

When they reached the back door of Viscount Glaint's mansion in Empress Borough, the two nobles used their usual means of returning. As for Fors

and Xio, they each relied on their own skills to leave.

About ten minutes later, Audrey, accompanied by her huge golden retriever, Susie, and her maids, openly left through the front door, in her own carriage.

As she listened to the sound of rolling wheels, she was unable to confirm if there were still people following her. She could only let her thoughts wander.

It's obvious that the daughter of Count Hall isn't a spy of any Beyonder faction…

There's nothing wrong with her past…

Her love for mysticism is well-known…

Her status and identity can provide assistance that's different from other people…

Perhaps, in two days, there will be members of the Psychology Alchemists who will try to come into contact with me… Audrey thought with some anticipation and some nervousness.

…

Although he said he was making preparations, Klein spent two days at the Quelaag Club as if nothing had happened. He even played a game of cards with the equestrian teacher, Talim, and the others, winning a few soli.

Before he went to bed, he didn't forget to visit the outside of Lawyer Jurgen's house to make sure if there were no lights and to feed the cat.

At eight o'clock on Friday night, he put on his iron mask and wore his black-hooded robe and entered the activity room of Old Mister Eye of Wisdom.

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CHAPTER 334
BULLETS

The only candle flickered its yellow flame, casting shadows on the walls around the activity room.

Klein found the most convenient escape point before surveying his surroundings. He saw the Eye of Wisdom with his deep cheek lines and the plump Apothecary.

Well, after another comparison, even though he's wearing an iron mask that covers half his face, it's still pretty clear that he was the man I met at Rice Circus who deserves a beating… Klein looked away and waited for the gathering to officially begin. The woman who had an Artisan backing her was very hidden among the participants, so he couldn't be sure that she was present before she spoke.

After a few minutes, Eye of Wisdom raised his head to look at the mechanical clock on the wall and chuckled.

"There's a lot of people here today."

"Let's begin."

Before he finished speaking, the plump Apothecary rushed to speak.

"I need a Beyonder creature for an experiment. It's best if it's an animal, and it's best if it's already restrained and one that's not too dangerous."

A beast-type Beyonder creature? Klein was slightly moved.

He remembered what the Apothecary had said in the circus theater and that he was apparently able to read the thoughts of beasts.

He's just an Apothecary; yet, he poses such an ability and is even looking to purchase a beast-type Beyonder creature. Hmm, after I sold him the Spring of Elves marrow crystal, he should've gathered the ingredients and advanced to the next Sequence… In other words, the Sequence after Apothecary has something to do directing wild beasts? Klein made a deduction based on the information he knew.

At this moment, someone responded to the Apothecary with a sneer, "Who would keep a Beyonder creature by their side?

"It's dangerous and easily discovered. Wouldn't it be easier and more concealed to kill them to obtain its Beyonder ingredients?"

The Apothecary was a person who refused to lose in a spar of words, so he immediately sneered.

"What a foolish thought!

"You can't guarantee that the Beyonder ingredient on a Beyonder creature is exactly what you need and that you can definitely sell it. You might as well tame it and direct it to be your helper, increasing your strength severalfold…”

As he spoke, his voice gradually grew softer. He felt as if he had revealed some important secret.

Damn it! Why can't I control this mouth of mine! The Apothecary figuratively smacked himself in the heart.

As expected… Klein nodded indiscernibly.

Without a doubt, the Apothecary's request wasn't met. Most of the participants here were Low-Sequence Beyonders, and their statuses in

Backlund weren't very prominent. With the need for them to be relatively alert, to the point of barely maintaining it, so how was it possible for them to extravagantly rear a Beyonder creature?

Furthermore, more importantly, there was the fact that wild Beyonder creatures were usually hostile to humans. Any encounter would usually lead to one dead, so if one wanted to capture them alive, they would need to have a sufficiently strong team or be strong enough to overwhelm the enemy. Of course, this didn't exclude particular Beyonders who possessed special abilities that were suitable for such situations.

After a bout of disappointment, the Apothecary coughed lightly and said, "I've brought quite a few bottles of medicine. All of you know the effects. If you want them, you can speak up when the gathering is almost over."

*The few medicines to treat wounds, go berserk, and increase one's ability in that aspect? *Klein silently lampooned. He chuckled and provided a suggestion.

"You can purchase a Sequence 9 formula, find the corresponding Beyonder ingredients, and then concoct the potion to feed the animal you fancy. This way, you will have a Sequence 9 Beyonder creature, and you can also continuously advance it with the subsequent potions.

"Of course, that's built on the premise that you are rich enough and can deal with the defective ones that lose control."

The Apothecary was stunned for a few seconds. After a while, he said, "How extravagant."

"Just saving up money and finding the Beyonder ingredients for myself is difficult enough for me. It's also a high probability event for an animal to lose control after they consume potions. It will take me several times before I succeed.

"Someone who can do this must have a mine or owns a bank."

Our Tarot Club's Miss Justice likely rears a Beyonder creature… Klein suddenly felt sorry for the Apothecary.

If one wanted to disregard it for the sole purpose of earning money, Apothecaries were the easiest among the Low-Sequence Beyonders to amass large amounts of wealth. The problem was that they were also easily targeted by the official Beyonders.

After a few more deals or failed transactions, Klein heard a voice that was deliberately suppressed, "I only brought one Beyonder weapon this time."

"They are fifty bullets with different effects. Twenty of them are engraved with the sun domain's labels and symbols, forming a complete charm. They can be used to purify ghost-related monsters. They cause more damage to wraiths and shadows, so they are called purifying bullets. There are another twenty bullets which are meant for corrupted creatures, known as demon hunting bullets. The other ten are bullets that counter evil-type monsters, known as exorcism bullets. Their effects can be maintained for eighteen months or more.

"Fifty bullets for 500 pounds or the Barbarian potion formula. It will come with a revolver with the matching caliber."

They did make related bullets according to my suggestions from last time. From the looks of it, they're more complicated than ordinary Beyonder weapons. It took them so long only to make a set… Klein didn't give the others a chance and directly said, "I have the Barbarian potion formula."

At this moment, a rather tall man offered a price.

"550 pounds."

In this day and age, a revolver was the most convenient Beyonder weapon to use and carry!

The well-hidden lady's voice was filled with unquenchable joy as she said, "Sir, I'm sorry. I have a preference for the Barbarian formula."

"600 pounds." The man raised the offer again.

"No, this is not about money." The woman with an Artisan backing her glanced at Klein. "Deal! But please pass the formula to Old Mister Eye of Wisdom for his notarization."

Phew, it's a good thing that I got the Dark Emperor card. Otherwise, if I met someone who can raise the price so ruthlessly, I definitely would've lost a lot of money today… Klein rolled up his robe, took out the Barbarian formula which he had long written from his inner pocket, and opened it to take a look.

"Sequence 8 Barbarian. Main ingredients: Grass of Madness, core horn crystal of a Land Rhinoceros. Supplementary ingredients: One deep-grained Walnut, one Fragrance Hornet Grass, 10 ml of the extract obtained from soaking poplar bark, 100 ml of liquor."

After confirming that it was correct, Klein folded the paper and handed it to the attendant.

Just like before, Eye of Wisdom took out the ring that was inlaid with many small diamonds. He mimicked the Beyonder powers of a Notary and confirmed that the formula was true.

Hearing this old man declare that "the formula is valid," the woman with the Artisan backing her heaved a sigh of relief and took out a square iron box the size of a palm.

After the attendant passed the formula to her, she eagerly rolled it open and read it a few times, as if she wanted to memorize it directly. As for Klein, he snapped open the box and looked at it.

There were three piles of bullets inside the metal box. One pile had a faint golden luster, as though they had just been fished out of hot water; the other was entirely silver and covered with patterns, cold yet sacred. The pile with the fewest bullets suffused a golden sheen amidst the brass color. He could vaguely see several labels and symbols engraved on it.

*Yes, it's authentic… *Klein had the ability to appraise the bullets in the field of mysticism. He snapped the lid shut and stored the item in the pocket under his robe.

As for the free revolver, it was nothing special. The body of the gun was a deeper brass color, and the handle was made out of walnut wood.

Since his underarm holster had also been lost back when he encountered the police inspection, Klein had to attach the revolver to his waist and cover it with his clothes.

After finishing the transaction, he looked around the activity room and deliberately raised his voice.

"I need strong purifying items like Sun Holy Water and Sun Sacred Emblem.

"I can buy it in gold, or I can use formulas as a barter, like the Sequence after Barbarian—Briber.

"Of course, if there are any questions regarding the mysticism and the Beyonder world that requires answering, I can also give it a try, but I can't guarantee that I can answer it."

As the Apothecary listened, he widened his eyes. He had a feeling that this was that "lucky lad."

*However, he had just become a Beyonder not long ago, so how could he have obtained so many valuable things? *The more he thought about it, the

more he gnashed his teeth, feeling as if he had made the wrong choice back then.

Luck was the most important thing!

The woman who had bought the Barbarian formula couldn't control herself and almost said in her original voice, "I don't have anything you need, but I can pay you in cash. Eight hundred pounds!"

Klein swallowed the word "deal" that he nearly said. He thought for a moment before chuckling.

"I'm only accepting bartering for the time being.

"I will most likely be back for the next gathering. You can seek out the relevant items in advance."

For the time being… The lady ruminated over the word and nodded slowly.

"Alright."

After that, no one else said anything, and Klein's needs were also not met. In Backlund, in the Loen Kingdom, the worshipers of the Eternal Blazing Sun could be considered heretics, so few of such items circulated beyond official channels.

Klein was slightly disappointed, but he wasn't too concerned. He had an alternative plan.

He clearly remembered that Miss Xio had once sought out a Beyonder believer of the Eternal Blazing Sun for purification!

And the lady who craved the Briber formula would definitely be actively looking for his desired items.

Klein stopped talking and listened to the subsequent exchanges.

When the gathering was coming to an end, an average built participant with no special characteristics pinched the iron mask on his face and said with a deep baritone voice, "I need an adult Black Widow Spider Silk Gland."

An adult Black Widow Spider Silk Gland? Sounds familiar. I seem to have heard of it somewhere… Klein frowned slightly. Without using divination, he tried hard to recall where.

Suddenly, he remembered the source of the familiar feeling.

It was one of the main ingredients for the Demoness of Pleasure!

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CHAPTER 335
EXPLORING VERDI STREET

"Pleasure" was Sequence 6 of the Demoness pathway. Klein had obtained its complete formula back when he channeled Madam Sharon's spirit. Although it was usually difficult to recall the exact details, and he had to rely on the help of dream divination to recall the memory, just hearing the main ingredient was enough to give him a sense of familiarity and make him form connections.

He couldn't help but glance over at the buyer, confirming that he was male in terms of skin color, figure, voice, and unmasked facial features.

The Sequence prior to Demoness of Pleasure is Witch. Regardless of their gender, as long as they pass that, they would all become women. This person clearly isn't one… He hasn't become a Witch yet, so why is he purchasing the main ingredient of a Demoness of Pleasure? Hmm… Could he be helping someone buy it? Is he the ally of some Witch or a loyal subordinate?

However, as a rather ancient secret organization, the Demoness Sect shouldn't be lacking in the corresponding ingredients. With their natural disposition, it would be normal for them to use the Beyonder characteristics left behind by former members to concoct the potions… Did the Witch behind the buyer lose her connection with the organization?

With these thoughts, Klein had the impulse to follow him.

However, after careful consideration, he gave up on this idea. Ignoring the question on how he could bypass the precautionary measures of Eye of Wisdom and lock onto the other party's tracks, just the fact that the other

party's situation was unknown, and with him not having the time to perform a divination, it was enough for him to choose to follow his heart's wishes.

What if there isn't only one Witch, but a Beyonder who's much stronger?

Moreover, it's a good thing for Witches to advance to Demoness of Pleasure. The former would cause calamities and harm many innocent people, but once they advance to the latter, their goal would be focused on pleasure. In simple terms, society would be less dangerous… Klein mumbled.

An adult Black Widow Spider Silk Gland was already considered to be relatively expensive and a rare Beyonder ingredient. It was just like the Thousand-faced Hunter's mutated pituitary gland and the Characteristic of a Human-skinned Shadow which Klein needed in order to ascend to Sequence 6. It was almost equivalent to the cost of half a house in the capital, so the buyer didn't receive a satisfactory response.

To be precise, no one responded.

The atmosphere of the gathering fell silent until the plump Apothecary started selling the medicine he brought.

After the previous trials, he received quite a few repeat customers. In less than three minutes, he had sold all the goods he could sell and collected more than fifty pounds in cash.

As Eye of Wisdom announced the end of the gathering, each participant left through different passages in a different order and at different intervals.

Klein was in the middle, and after he reached a secluded street, he took off his disguise and immediately set off for East Borough, arriving at Black Palm Street on that cold and foul-smelling night. On the way, he had purchased an armpit holster. He entering his rented one-bedroom apartment.

Without taking a break, he took out his revolver and opened the metal box containing the Beyonder bullets. He then took out two purifying bullets, two demon hunting bullets, and one exorcism bullet. Then, he loaded them one by one into the chamber.

Taking a pose, he tested the feeling and whether he could fire normally. Klein inserted the revolver into his armpit and busied himself with other preparations.

For example, he checked to see if there was anything unusual about the All-Black Eye in the iron cigarette case. He also placed Azik's copper whistle in the metal box containing the bullets, and with the help of Holy Night Powder, he created a sealed wall of spirituality that stuck to the surface of the box, completing the shielding of the ancient, delicate copper whistle.

After confirming the shapes and positions of the three charms, Klein headed above the gray fog for divination. Then, he put on his cap and went out again.

His target was 32 Verdi Street which was south of the bridge. It was where the thief had found the Master Key!

There might be clues to the Apprentice formula or clues to related items there. It was somewhere that Klein had long wanted to explore, but he suspected that the man who died a tragic death had turned into a wraith-like creature. He didn't dare to take action until he bought purifying bullets.

A Magician never performs unprepared!

Before the steam subway—the most economical mode of transport—had stopped running, Klein arrived south of the bridge before transferring to a public carriage and arrived near Verdi Street.

It was already late at night, and a chilling drizzle filled Backlund. There were barely any pedestrians on the street, and the light from the gas lamps was blurred by the liquid on the glass, making everything seem dreamlike.

Klein circled the area and observed Unit 32's situation. He walked to its side, climbed to the second floor, and easily entered the target's interior from the balcony door which clearly couldn't be closed by the thief from before.

He didn't bring the Master Key, fearing that the item would cause an abnormal chain reaction here.

The layout of the house was very normal. A corridor that connected the two balconies ran through the entire second floor. There were bedrooms, a bathroom, a solarium, and an activity room lining the sides.

With the help of the crimson moonlight shining in from the balcony, Klein saw that all the doors had been opened. All kinds of items were thrown on the ground in disarray.

It should be the result from the thief from before. He couldn't take away all the items, so he could only search for the most valuable ones… However, with the Master Key, there's no need for him to open doors… Klein went through the rooms, one by one, looking for things that might be involved with mysticism.

After an unknown period of time, a black-gloved Klein arrived at the staircase without any success.

Just as he took two steps forward, a figure suddenly appeared before him!

The figure was pressed against the wall at the corner of the stairs, its back was facing Klein. Its black hair was so thick that it almost covered its neck.

Klein, who had long activated his Spirit Vision didn't even have time to observe, for the figure suddenly moved!

His neck creaked as he turned his head while his back remained facing the second floor!

Amidst the hazy, weak, and illusory crimson illumination, the figure's eyes were bulging out of their sockets, filled with fear.

Thud! Thud!

The two eyeballs hit the ground.

Bang!

The figure's head fell off its neck and hit the wooden staircase.

He's long dead; he's without any spirituality glow… Klein watched and judged calmly, as though what had just happened was a farce.

He guessed from the details of the man's old black clothes and the number of rooms open on the second floor, and he decided that this was another burglar, one who had visited the house after the previous one.

Unfortunately, he wasn't that lucky.

Could it be that the Master Key was actually restraining the "danger" here, and when it was taken away, pandemonium was set loose? Klein drew his revolver, adjusted the chamber to the firing position, and cocked the revolver. He walked up the stairs to the corpse.

He squatted down and examined it briefly, but he couldn't find anything other than the fact that his neck had been twisted.

After pondering for a few seconds, Klein straightened his body and carefully went down the stairs. Even though he was standing on a wooden staircase, he didn't make any creaking sounds.

One step, two steps, three steps. After walking down the flight of stairs, he reached the ground.

In front of him was a corridor that connected the two sides. The crimson moonlight shone in, outlining the outline of the balcony. The doors on both sides of the corridor were wide open, revealing a messy scene of scattered items. There was no living room, dining room, or kitchen here.

This is the second floor!

Klein went down from the second floor, only to return to the second floor!

Throughout the entire process, he didn't discover anything out of the ordinary!

Klein didn't panic as he slowly turned around. Behind him, there was a staircase leading downwards!

That is to say, my special ability can only resist the invasion of my Beyonder powers through the use of Beyonder powers such as dreams and spirit channeling, or for me to realize that the environment I'm in does not belong to the real world… I'll still be influenced by hallucinations… Klein took out his matchbox and took out a few matches with his gun-carrying hand.

He continued down, throwing a match down every few steps.

Once again Klein came to the corner of the stairs and saw the dead body with its head separated from its body.

At this moment, a cold wind blew across the back of his neck, causing his hair to stand on end.

Pa!

Klein snapped his fingers, and a red flame soared from behind him, soaring toward the ceiling.

Those flames seemed to be a monster that was baring its fangs and brandishing its claws, but the flames didn't burn anything.

Klein was about to turn around and look with his Spirit Vision when his body suddenly froze, as if he had fallen into a lake frozen in winter.

He couldn't help but tremble as his left hand was slowly reaching for his neck as he forcibly "suppressed" it.

At that moment, Klein sighed softly.

He forced his left hand into his pocket, removed the wall of spirituality, and opened the metal box containing the bullets.

Next, he held Azik's copper whistle, took it out, shook it, and threw it into the air above the stairs!

In almost an instant, he felt the coldness and stiffness in his body disappear.

In his spiritual perception, a sinister and cold mass leaped out like a dog fetching a ball as it pounced at Azik's copper whistle!

Klein smiled, raised his right hand, aimed at the copper whistle, and pulled the trigger. He softly said, "Bye bye."

Bang!

The pale gold purifying bullet flew out and accurately hit that cold and indistinct object.

A blood-curdling screech sounded out as the golden flames outlined a human's silhouette in midair!

Under the bright and warm light, all the coldness and evilness quickly disappeared.

Clang!

Azik's copper whistle landed on the ground, bounced a few times, and rolled to the living room on the first floor.

When Klein looked around, he saw that things were now significantly different. For example, the head of the corpse wasn't separated from its body. He had strangled himself with his own hands.

*Heh, it really is easy when you're prepared… *Klein chuckled and went down the stairs again. He successfully reached the first floor and picked up Azik's copper whistle. He then swung it twice to see if there were any other wraiths or shadows here.

After confirming that there were no more problems, he decided to head straight to the basement.

As he walked down the flight of stairs and went through the door, he saw the picture he had seen in his dream divination. He saw the brown notebook on the long table.

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CHAPTER 336
THE ABRAHAM FAMILY

Other than the Master Key and the silver pocket watch with inlaid diamonds which were taken by the thief, this place is still in the same state as what I'd seen in my dream… Klein looked around and saw black iron pots, glass jars, and bronze lampstands that had candles which had long since been extinguished.

His Spirit Vision and spiritual perception told him that these were all very ordinary items. They didn't carry the slightest trace of a spiritual luster.

Hmm, but compared to before, there's still something extra… Klein reached out with his left black-gloved palm and touched the surface of the long table.

His fingers were immediately stained with visible dust.

After carefully carefully and making some preliminary divinations, Klein failed to find any secret chambers or hidden compartments; thus, he turned his attention to the brown notebook.

Carefully flipping through it, the contents of the first page entered his eyes.

"This will go into the annals of the rise of a cursed family!

"I want to remember every key point! Future descendants, please remember every word that I've said!"

…It's a pity that you lost control and died just moments after taking the Sequence 9 potion. The illustrious glory of the Abraham family can only

remain as words… Klein lampooned under his breath and continued reading, quickly flipping through the pages.

He planned to take the notebook away once he confirmed its value, not planning to stay any longer.

"We, the Abraham family, were one of the most powerful nobles of the Fourth Epoch, and we were the main supporters of the Tudor Dynasty. In that era, be it Loen's Augustus family, Feysac's Einhorn family, Intis's Sauron family, or Feynapotter's Castiya family, all of them looked up to us.

"Indeed, they weren't weak back then, but we were stronger!

"Even the rumored Antigonus family and the Zaratul families were slightly weaker than us.

"Unfortunately, the glory of our family disappeared in the War of the Four Emperors. Ancestor Bethel went missing in that war where the deities personally fought. The remaining High-Sequence Beyonders all perished.

"Ever since then, our Abraham family has been under a terrible curse. Generations after generations of ancestors have attempted to revive our family, but without exception, all of them went mad and lost control. Some of them did so just before becoming a High-Sequence Beyonder or at Sequence 7 and 8.

"And every case of losing control brings about a disaster that is close to annihilating the family. The accursed forget the family name carved in their bloodlines and hurt the other members of the family without restraint. They were already monsters!

"For the continuation of the family, the Abraham family made a painful decision to no longer live together. Instead, it split up into small families that migrated to various parts of the Northern Continent. That way, even if someone lost control and started a massacre, their bloodline wouldn't be cut off because of this.

"My father was afraid of the curse, so he chose to remain as an ordinary person. If it wasn't for the fact that the bloodline's last name is still ever shining, he wouldn't even be willing to tell me these things.

"I want to record this down. I want to keep it on my mind. I want to remember the glory and the disaster of the Abraham family."

Every Beyonder generation would eventually lose control without exception? The curse of the Abraham family is even more terrifying than that of the City of Silver… Wait a minute, they should all be from the Apprentice pathway. Could it be that they heard that Mr. Door's plea for help? This… this isn't a cry for help; it's clearly a life-depriving curse!

However, according to Miss Magician's description, it isn't because she became an Apprentice that she had heard those illusory ravings during the full moon, but because of her use of the bracelet on her wrist. Afterwards, she couldn't escape the ravings regardless of whether she wore it or not.

And what's the reason for those Beyonders of the Abraham family? Perhaps the curse has nothing to do with Mr. Door?

Well, the notebook mentioned that the ancestor of the Abraham family, Bethel Abraham had disappeared in the War of the Four Emperors. Could he be Mr. Door? He was banished from the real world, lost in the darkness, and left trapped in a storm?

There's a possibility that the easiest target to ask for help would naturally be descendants from the same bloodline who are of the same Beyonder pathway but of a relatively lower Sequence. It's a pity that because all the powerful Beyonders had perished, his shouts only bring about a curse on the family that has lasted for more than a thousand years, almost causing the whole Abraham family to disappear…

Is this the reason why Mr. Door is so aware of the history of the Fourth Epoch and the details of the War of the Four Emperors?

*If my suspicions are true, I can only exclaim: *

The Abrahams really are an unfortunate family!

I wonder if the things mentioned by the owner of the notebook were affected by the passage of time of over a thousand years and the separation of the family, which might result in discrepancies… In the War of the Four Emperors, the deities actually personally participated in battle? Klein slightly frowned, and the speed at which he flipped the pages became faster and faster.

…

“…Father, who chose to remain an ordinary person, ultimately succumbed to his disease. This dealt my mother a huge blow and she quickly departed with him.

"And that means I'm free.

"But what hurts me is that Father didn't tell me many things about Beyonders to prevent me from embarking down the cursed path. I have to come into contact with them myself and understand them.

"Thankfully, he didn't violate the orders of the elder. He still handed me the potion formula of Apprentice, Trickmaster, and Astrologer at his deathbed.

"I will repeat the three formulas to prevent myself from forgetting.

"Sequence 9. Apprentice…

"Sequence 8. Trickmaster…

"Sequence 7. Astrologer…”

After Klein saw that, he pricked his eyebrows slightly, feeling that the trip tonight had been worthwhile, and that he hadn't wasted the purifying bullet.

Of course, he still had to go above the gray fog to confirm its authenticity.

Astrologer… The Apprentice pathway actually has a divination series job as well… In that case, one of my speculations from the past might be closer to the truth. The Seer pathway and the Apprentice pathway might be interchangeable at high Sequences… Klein nodded slightly and continued to flip through the pages.

Although he had already determined the value of the notes, he didn't want to leave the scene for the time being.

If the last few pages of the notebook noted that something had been hidden somewhere, he would definitely have to come back again. Since that was the case, why go through so much trouble?

As the pages turned, Klein roughly figured out the Beyonder history of this Abraham descendant.

After his parents died, he began trying to touch base with the mysticism circles to gather information about the Sequence potions and purchase the corresponding Beyonder ingredients.

After two years of hard work, recording many still unconfirmed mysticism knowledge, he finally succeeded and concocted the Apprentice potion.

At the end of the notebook, he wrote:

"According to my knowledge of mysticism, the spirit world and the real world would overlap the most on the night of the full moon. That is the time when one's spirituality is at its best, and it is also the most suitable time to consume the potion and advance.

"I will become an Apprentice by the next full moon!

"I need to get stronger, step by step, and reproduce the illustrious glory of the Abraham family!

"Once I reach Sequence 7, I'll be able to contact the elders according to the regulations set by the family.

"I know the method of communication well, so this is a secret that cannot be recorded."

Take a potion to advance yourself during the full moon? Klein was stunned for a moment. He couldn't help but tap his chest four times in a clockwise manner to draw the crimson moon.

"May the Goddess forgive you for your ignorance."

Klein vaguely understood why the man had lost control on the spot!

According to his speculation, the curse that had plagued the Abraham family for more than a thousand years was probably related to Mr. Door's call for help during the full moon.

And that guy actually chose to consume the Apprentice potion on the night of the full moon.

In that case, it was highly likely that he would hear that illusory mumbles while the effects of the potion had yet to fade, and his spirituality was in a very unstable state.

As such, he exploded with a bang…

Fortunately, the "Hornacis… Flegrea…" that I heard back then wasn't lethal… Klein subconsciously sighed.

Then, he thought of the oddity of the Master Key and vaguely came up with a hunch.

The formation of the Master Key stems not only from the condensation of an Apprentice's Beyonder characteristic but also from Mr. Door's illusory ravings. Thus, the occasional problem of causing the holder to be lost

becomes rather dangerous. It often allows the holder to enter inappropriate situations!

This can be considered a kind of curse!

And taking everything into consideration, Mr. Door being the ancestor of the Abraham family, Bethel, is quite possible.

Phew… Klein exhaled when he saw that there was no information about any hidden treasures. He took the brown notebook and left the basement.

As he dropped Azik's copper whistle, he retraced the same path he took to get there. When he reached the balcony, he raised his left hand and snapped his fingers.

The scattered matches on the stairs lit up with a crimson light.

They soon extinguished, leaving only minor burn marks.

…

After taking a detour to East Borough to get rid of his disguise, Klein returned to Minsk Street before midnight.

He went above the gray fog and used spirit dowsing to confirm the authenticity of the three formulas.

Soon after, he tried to conjure the fake World opposite him on the mottled long table.

Klein was about to manipulate him when he suddenly raised his hand and smacked his forehead.

I almost forgot!

I brought the All-Black Eye back to the real world…

After going through the trouble, he made The World appear in the majestic palace and changed the surroundings to look like that of an ordinary room.

Then, he made The World pose piously as he said with a hoarse voice, "The Fool that doesn't belong to this era…

"Please tell Miss Magician that I've already obtained the Trickmaster potion formula.

"I hope that she can exchange it for items in the Sun domain which are good at purification and exorcism. If the value isn't equal, then I'm willing to make up for it with additional gold pounds."

After manipulating The World, Klein turned the scene into a ball of light and transmitted it to the crimson star representing The Magician.

He clearly remembered that during the last time Miss Xio had found someone to purify and exorcise her, Miss Magician had also been present!

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CHAPTER 337
THE SEARCH FOR A MISSING PERSON

Fors flipped through the calendar on her desk and used a pen to mark the date of the upcoming full moon.

She had decided that, as soon as she heard that horrible, illusory raving, she would chant the name of The Fool and pass the painful minutes above the gray fog.

Life is truly filled with things to look forward to… She closed the novel in her hands, ready to turn off the iron grille gas lamp that was set into the wall.

At that moment, a flash appeared in front of Fors's eyes. She saw the boundless gray fog and a lofty figure that resided in a majestic ancient palace, as well as a man who was praying devoutly.

When the voice reached her ears, she almost jumped, feeling both alarmed and joyful.

The Trickmaster formula that I've been arduously searching for all these years has been found just like that?

I participated in so many different Beyonder gatherings and failed to find any clues to the Trickmaster formula; yet, it has been found just like that?

And not even a week has passed since I made the request!

Th-this is the Tarot Club… As expected, it's not something ordinary Beyonder gatherings can compare with! Fors sighed with emotion, and endured her excitement and joy as she cautiously responded, "Mr. Fool, is that formula authentic?"

"Yes." The Fool, who was sitting on the high back chair and looking down, replied calmly.

Fors suddenly clenched her fist and secretly pumped it by her waist twice. Almost without any hesitation, she asked, "That was Mr. World, right?

"Please tell him that I will find what he needs as soon as possible."

When the gray fog dissipated and everything was over, Fors remained stunned for two seconds. She couldn't suppress her excitement as she stood up to pace back and forth in her room.

The Sun's domain, items that are good at purification and exorcism… I encountered them only twice in the past. But they were bought by others. They might not be willing to offer them again… Yes, back at Mr. A's gathering, Xio had hired a devotee of the Eternal Blazing Sun to perform a purification and exorcism ritual. He's at least Sequence 7, and he should have the relevant items. Or perhaps, he grasps key clues to them… I just wonder how much it'll cost. Although Mr. World promises to pay the difference, I might not be able to come up with the amount needed for the initial payment… Fors's thoughts gradually shifted to her financial situation.

She now had 370 pounds in cash, mainly earned from what Viscount Glaint had paid for the Apothecary formula. She also had 510 pounds in her bank account, which added up to nearly 900 pounds.

As for something similar, it can go as high as 2,000 pounds, while the cheapest might cost from 500 to 600 pounds; yet, it might not necessarily be the kind of item that Mr. World needs… What if I run into a suitable item but don't have enough money? Get a loan from the bank, or a loan from an usury with a higher interest rate? As long as all goes well, then when Mr.

World pays the difference, my debt will easily be repaid… Maybe I could borrow from Miss Audrey for a few days. She usually never cares about money, so she will definitely not collect any interest… Fors quickly came up with a solution.

Just then, Xio, who had gone to somewhere secluded at night to practice her combat skills, returned to their rented two bedroom apartment. Seeing that the lights were still on in her room, she knocked on the door and asked, "Are you pulling an all-nighter to write the beginning of your new book?

"Eh, Fors, you seem really happy. Did the publisher increase your rates?"

"No, no, no." Fors was slightly taken aback before she forced a smile. "I just received a piece of information that's suspected to be a clue to the Trickmaster potion formula."

"Really? Your waiting has finally paid off!" Xio totally didn't notice Fors's hidden oddity.

Seeing her good friend so happy for her, Fors couldn't help but sigh to herself.

I'm already a member of a secret organization. From that moment forth, I've taken on a fate that requires me to constantly hide and lie to my friends…

Is this the price—one out of many—to be paid?

…

Saturday morning. Klein once again visited Inventor Leppard at St. George Borough's Sird Street.

Since the bicycle had yet to be patented, he only paid the last twenty pounds and exhorted Leppard not to rush to talk about subsequent investments and partnerships until he had the patent.

With regards to this, Leppard was very agreeable. He had been tricked twice before for the same reason—before getting a patent, once the potential investors who he had made contact with had fully understood his product, he was kicked aside to watch as the potential investor bribed the patent office and acquired the patent first.

After leaving Leppard's place, Klein arrived at Isengard Stanton's place in Hillston Borough at the appointed time. It was a dark and gloomy house.

Today was the day that the rewards for the serial murder were going to be disbursed!

Walking through the living room and into the activity room, Klein saw the two detectives he was more familiar with, Kaslana and Stuart, and sat down next to the latter.

"Sherlock, how much do you think we'll get this time? It should be no less than protecting Adol. Of course, I didn't do much, so what I can receive will be limited. Emperor Roselle once said, 'the more plowing and weeding, the better the crop.'" Stuart clenched his fist and held it to his bearded chin.

Klein guessed with interest.

"The split might go as high as a few hundred pounds, and even the lowest wouldn't be less than 10 pounds."

And I'm the one that will get the higher end of the split… If Isengard Stanton's words were as credible as he had described… Klein added in his stirred heart.

At that moment, a white-shirted, brown-vested Isengard, with white hair at his temples and a thinly contoured face, entered the activity room while carrying his signature pipe. As the fireplace burned, he sat down in a reclining chair and said with a smile, "Ladies and gentlemen.

"I just got back from the Backlund police station. They acknowledged our contribution, and they think we've been instrumental in cracking the case.

"Although we didn't participate in the subsequent capture, we can still obtain half the bounty.

"In other words, we'll split a thousand pounds in cash!

"This is considered quite a handsome bounty, even in Backlund. A single detective has to have zero expenses—not eating or drinking, and even resorting to sleeping on the streets—for four or five years to amass this amount."

The atmosphere in the living room immediately became relaxed. Everyone was filled with anticipation about the reward they would receive.

Even Klein was no exception as he guessed the amount Isengard would give him.

It should be at least a hundred pounds, right? he whispered silently.

Isengard took a puff on his pipe, narrowed his eyes, and said in a satisfied tone, "Everyone, thank you for your trust in me. I will now do the splitting.

"The biggest contributor this time was Detective Sherlock Moriarty. The ideas and train of thoughts that he provided us had allowed us to find more clues and put us on the right track. He's a genuine expert at deduction!

"Ma'am Kaslana can bear testament to this. I still have a few letters from Detective Moriarty, and anyone in doubt can take a look."

That's very fair… He actually didn't list himself as the biggest contributor… Klein turned to the great detective, Isengard Stanton, and viewed him in a different light.

It's no wonder that he has such authority in the detective circle!

Seeing that there were no objections, Isengard nodded and said, "I declare that Detective Sherlock Moriarty will be awarded 300 pounds!"

Immediately, the detectives in the activity room broke out into whispers.

From time to time they looked up at Klein, as if they finally recognized this brilliant detective whom Mr. Stanton had praised as an expert at deduction.

What a generous man, a just man… Klein grinned and ultimately didn't act modestly.

In second place were Isengard himself and Kaslana, who each received 160 pounds, while the rest of the detectives split the remaining 380 pounds depending on their respective contributions. Even the lowest received 15 pounds, equivalent to three or four weeks of their usual earnings. This was the benefit of handling a major case with a high bounty.

Stuart, who had received forty pounds, was very pleased because he felt that he had only done two days of observation. Furthermore, the subject he observed ended up not being the final confirmed suspect.

Of course, he also had to pay a portion of the forty pounds—all informants and helpers involved in the matter had to be paid.

After distributing the bounty, Stuart suddenly remembered something. He took out a piece of paper from his pocket and said to Klein, "Sherlock, I've recently accepted a missing person assignment that pays a lot. Try using your resources and help me pay attention to it. If the person is found, I won't forget your share."

"Sure, no problem," Klein replied indifferently.

Stuart handed over the piece of paper and said, "It's this man. He's been missing for nearly two weeks.

"As he's involved in some improper conduct or might even border on committing a crime, the client doesn't wish for us to seek the police's help."

Klein nodded slightly and unfolded the paper. He saw a black-and-white photo that was made through lithography.

It was a man with hair that was combed back in a slanted fashion, and there was a certain elegance in his propriety.

He was about twenty-seven or twenty-eight-years-old. He had a handsome appearance, but there was an undisguised air of arrogance between his eyes. His nose was high, and his lips were thin.

"Right, his name is…” Stuart recalled and said, "Emlyn White."

Emlyn White… Klein suddenly turned his head to look at Stuart.

"Ah!"

Isn't that the name of the vampire who's imprisoned in the basement by Father Utravsky?

…

In Duke Negan's mansion, Audrey, who had been invited to a tea party, was listening to her mother and Duchess Della chatting about nobility matters with a slightly bored expression on her face.

Her eyes swept across the three-layered rack, the uniquely-styled muffins, cake, and other delicious tidbits. She felt that she had been indulging herself recently, so she lightly picked up her cup and sipped the black tea.

After a while, she got up apologetically and, accompanied by the maid, went to the bathroom.

As soon as she came out, she met a tall, middle-aged woman with slender eyebrows and a graceful appearance.

It was Duchess Della's younger sister, the wife of a hereditary viscount, Lady Norma.

After exchanging the formalities, Norma looked at Audrey and said with a chuckle, "I heard that our beautiful young lady is very interested in mysticism?"

She mentioned mysticism. Could it be that someone from the Psychology Alchemists is here to test me? Audrey instantly entered her state as a Telepathist. A little embarrassed, she lowered her head and replied, "Yes."

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CHAPTER 338
THE EXPERIENCED KLEIN

After hearing Audrey's affirmation, Lady Norma laughed.

"What an honest child.

"I happen to know some experts in mysticism who are very knowledgeable. Would you like to chat with them?"

"Definitely. That's exactly what I want. Praise the Lady." Feigning surprise, Audrey drew a crimson moon on her chest.

With a smile on her face, Madam Norma nodded slightly and said, "How about we have our afternoon tea together tomorrow?"

"No problem." Audrey's excited eyes held a little innocence.

After she bade Lady Norma farewell and headed for the living room, her smile gradually settled as her bearing turned composed and relaxed.

The detailed changes in her body language, the color of her emotions, and the changes in her Body of Heart and Mind that were reflected superficially, they all imply that she holds no ill intentions, but she was rather nervous… It seems like Lady Norma might really be a member of the Psychology Alchemists… Hmm, she had been observing my expression and actions, but she couldn't adjust or hide her emotions. Maybe she's like Susie, a Spectator, but unfortunately, she didn't know that the person in front of her is a Telepathist… Audrey thought, feeling both perturbed and proud. She couldn't help but let her feet gracefully walk in a straight line with one foot taking the place of the other.

…

In the house of Isengard Stanton situated in Hillston Borough.

Klein's lips quivered a few times, but in the end, he didn't ask Stuart who his employer was or what he looked like.

He decided not to get involved in matters involving Emlyn White as best as he could.

Although based on Emlyn's words, he was a law-abiding vampire, but that was only limited to his claims. There were still too many gaps about his earlier life for Klein to be sure that he had not harmed the innocent.

As a result, he lacked the motivation to seek out Father Utravsky to save Emlyn. After all, Father Utravsky was a Dawn Paladin who was skilled in combat and had the aid of mystical items. Furthermore, he was an unweakened Dawn Paladin!

Besides, it would make it easy for him to expose his true identity to Father Utravsky and Emlyn White.

Let's hope that he can gain the approval of that powerful priest as soon as possible and finish the "sentence" to be let out on "parole"…In his heart, Klein tapped four times in a clockwise fashion for Emlyn White.

After the bounty was divided, the detectives took their leave, and Klein was given the best treatment—he was walked out the door by the great Detective Isengard.

Holding his pipe, Isengard coughed lightly and said, "There are still some suspicious points about the serial murder case that we haven't fully understood. There might be an even more ferocious guy hiding behind the killer's back. You must be careful not to spread the word that you played an important role in this case."

*It seems like the official Beyonders also suspect that the gigantic Devil dog has an owner… *Klein replied solemnly, "I know, I had my own guesses about this too.

"Mr. Stanton, you have to be careful as well. You were the one who gathered us, and you're a major partner of the police."

Isengard put the pipe into his mouth, then he took it out and said, "Sherlock, I guess I'll call you Sherlock. You can rest assured that, although I'm no longer young, I'm still an outstanding fighter, an excellent marksman with an instinctive vigilance."

Furthermore, you have a high probability of being a Beyonder not from the low Sequences. I just wonder which pathway you belong to… Klein thought for a moment and said, "Mr. Stanton, you don't seem to be a native from Backlund? Your accent is closer to that of Sivellaus."

"Yes, just like your Midseashire accent," Isengard admitted frankly.

The two detectives smiled at each other as an acknowledgment of the other's observational ability.

Klein returned to 15 Minsk Street before nightfall.

Well, I now have 1,224 pounds in notes, plus 5 gold coins, and a small amount of change. This is quite a considerable amount compared to how much I had when I first came to Backlund. However, Sequence 6 Beyonder ingredients will cost at least 1,500 a pop. Sometimes, because they're scarce and rare, the price might even increase severalfold. And Beyonders who can obtain such items usually aren't low in Sequence; they wouldn't misjudge its value and sell it at a low price. It's quite impossible to pick it up at bargain prices…

Although the lady with the Artisan behind her is very eager for the Dark Emperor potion formulas, she has to consider the progress of her advancement. For her to only be at Sequence 9, it's quite impossible for her

to spend a large amount of money to buy the formulas up to Sequence 6 in advance, unless she's filthy rich… Well, you can't always be so exploitative…

While in thought, Klein was in no hurry to prepare dinner. Instead, he went back to his bedroom, drew the curtains, and went above the gray fog.

He had an idea that he needed to verify.

Sitting in The Fool's seat, he stretched out his hand and picked up the unadorned brass Master Key.

Based on the notebook he read last night from an Abraham descendant, he guessed that the man had lost control on the spot because of his choice of advancing during the full moon.

Therefore, the curse-like ability of the Master Key, which can make people go lost, only to find themselves in bad spots, has a high probability of being contaminated by Mr. Door's illusory ravings, other than the resentment and indignation in the Beyonder characteristic.

"So what sort of changes will it undergo when the moon is full?" Klein mumbled.

Conjuring a pen and paper, he wrote the divination statement he had thought long in advance: "What it manifests during the full moon."

Holding the piece of paper in one hand and the Master Key in the other, Klein leaned back in his chair, gave a self-deprecating laugh and said, *"I'm courting death again…*

"But there shouldn't be too much danger this time. Mr. Door is far separated from the real world. He's lost in the depths of the darkness. Furthermore, I have the gray fog to shield me."

In this case, the danger from divination was no different from direct divination. The experienced Klein half closed his eyes, and his pupils turning dark as he constantly chanted, "What it manifests during the full moon."

…

After seven times, Klein fell into a dream.

In that gray, detached, illusory world, he once again saw the basement where the Abraham descendant had died.

The flesh and blood here had long since dried up. The silver pocket watch inlaid with diamonds and the ancient-looking Master Key had yet to be stolen. They were still lying on the ground.

Suddenly, a sharp, hollow voice echoed in Klein's ears.

It was like a thin needle stabbing into his head, extending inside, bit by bit, while it scraped as if it was going to completely peel off his scalp!

This extreme pain caused Klein to wake up and sit up straight.

He looked at the blue veins protruding on the back before they quickly restored to normal.

Hmm, it's much more manageable than spying on the Eternal Blazing Sun or secretly listening to the True Creator's angry roars… Klein went from pressing down his fingers to rapping them as he thought.

Of course, if this were the outside world, he believed that he absolutely wouldn't have had such a reaction.

If Miss Magician had always been listening to such pleas, she would've long lost control… From the looks of it, due to the resulting curse, the Master Key makes the voice even clearer. That's not right. Father Utravsky

has likely survived the night of the Blood Moon with the Master Key in hand. He clearly wasn't affected…

Perhaps he had stored the Master Key in his bedroom and stayed in the hall outside for confession. Hmm, as long as one makes contact with the Master Key, they will hear the pleas during the full moon?

Phew. Before becoming a High-Sequence Beyonder, I wouldn't dare listen to it in the real world… What I heard just now seemed to be "requesting assistance" in ancient Hermes… Klein carefully recalled and confirmed what he had heard.

With regards to this, the only thing he could do was twitch the corner of his mouth. He didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

This is really a death-styled plea in the true meaning of the phrase!

It's a pity. If only we could make those people from the Rose School of Thought hear Mr. Door's plea for help on the night of the full moon. With their already cold warped personalities, they would definitely explode one after the another.

After carefully considering if there was any way to achieve this goal, Klein returned to the real world, and according to his plan, he enjoyed dinner, changed his clothes, and left the house.

He made two transfers and arrived outside the Bravehearts Bar. He only circled it once without ordering any alcohol before leaving.

While doing so, he noticed that Kaspars was back again.

After walking a block, Klein specially got on a rental carriage and made the driver head to Cherwood Borough.

An illusory figure appeared in front of him just as the horse moved forward. It was Miss Sharron, wearing a long black regal dress.

"Are you done with your preparations?" Sharron asked coldly.

The soft black cap on her head was firmly pressed against her light blonde hair. Coupled with her pale face, her exquisite facial features gave her the beauty of a doll.

Klein answered frankly, "Not yet.

"I'm still waiting for an item."

Sharron said with unperturbed blue eyes, "I've prepared a mystical item."

That's why you took the mission of being a three-day bodyguard for a thousand pounds? Back then, the item caught your eyes, but you lacked the money? Klein smiled in enlightenment.

"Don't be anxious. The more prepared we are, the greater the chance of success."

Furthermore, I can usually use a mystical item from the Sun domain to make up for my shortcomings… Klein added in his heart.

Seeing that Sharron had stopped talking, he said, "I came here today to get you guys to help me in an experiment."

"What is it?" Sharron asked simply.

Klein said with a serious and trustworthy expression, "According to Maric's description, I think your curses are different. During the full moon, he has to endure the crazy desire for bloodlust which makes him unable to fight. As for you, you would enter a weakened state if you do not absorb the souls of humans. Is that right?"

Sharron listened quietly and nodded.

"Yes."

"I don't have any solution to your problem at the moment, but I think it's still possible to suppress Maric's problem temporarily. For example, taking appropriate medicine and letting him be in a state where he doesn't have any emotions. That way, during that time, he won't be in pain, and he will be able to participate in the battle." Klein expressed his thoughts.

Sharon shook her head and said, "It doesn't work.

"Such medicine is no longer effective against him."

No longer? In other words, it had worked before? Klein thoughtfully asked, "Why?"

"He had injected too much in the past. Even if he changed types, it'll only be effective for the first three to four times. We're unable to find any new types…" Sharon said, suddenly turning silent, as though remembering something.

Hearing her words, Klein immediately smiled.

"I have a different kind of sedative here, from that Apothecary."

Seeing that Sharron didn't say that this sedative was ineffective, he clasped his hands and continued, "I'll give you one and let Maric try it during the full moon. It's going to be a full moon tomorrow night.

"If it's effective, let him drink two or even three in one go before the battle."

As for whether he would develop a resistance to the same medicine in the future, that's not something that needs to be considered right now… Klein thought calmly.

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CHAPTER 339
PSYCHIATRIST

Sharron took the sedative that was stored in a glass tube, looked at the liquid that looked pure, and lightly nodded.

"Alright."

As expected of someone who doesn't waste her breath… Klein smiled and said, "Miss Sharron, can you tell me the candidate locations for the battleground that you've decided on? I wish to familiarize myself with the surroundings in the next few days. This way, no matter where you ultimately choose, my preparations would be more than sufficient."

And since they have the right to choose the location of the final battle, they won't worry about the possibility of me informing the authorities or any other Beyonder who might try to take advantage of the situation… Of course, if she really doesn't trust me, she could try another "notarization"… Klein thought quietly.

Sharron stared at him for a few seconds with her blue eyes before saying, "Prepare a map of Backlund when you're back.

"Leave it on the coffee table."

"No problem. I hope that this cooperation will not only go smoothly but also be enjoyable." Klein habitually leaned forward to shake hands.

Sharron lowered her head to take a look, and her figure gradually faded into the air.

Klein continued his motion and raised his right hand to smooth his black hair, laughing dryly in the process.

He had asked for the location of the battleground ahead of time, not only to prepare for the mission but also to be on guard against Sharron and Maric.

Although their philosophy was to suppress and restrain their desires, and it was unlikely they wouldn't kick someone to the curb when they'd outlived their usefulness. Klein couldn't be sure that Wraith Steve, Zombie Jason, and Werewolf Tyre didn't have what they had abnormally desired. If there really was a treasure that would cause any ordinary Beyonder to have strong malicious intent, Klein really couldn't guarantee that the two Mutants would be able to control themselves.

Therefore, he had to figure out the environment in advance and prepare an escape route in the event that they wished to silence him.

It wasn't that Klein didn't trust Sharron, who he had went through life-and-death with, but it was the most basic form of self-protection.

*One shouldn't have the heart to harm others, but one must be vigilant so as to not be harmed… *Klein turned his head to look out the window and sighed inwardly in Chinese.

One gas lamp after another kept being left behind as the carriage went forward. The streets became more spacious and cleaner, and it took him more than half an hour to get back to Minsk Street.

It's really expensive taking a carriage at this time... Klein looked up at the nearly black sky and the red moon that seemed to barely pierce through the clouds.

He walked on for a while, and suddenly he saw that the house of Lawyer Jurgen was dark.

Pulling out his gold pocket watch, he pressed it open and glanced at it. With a chuckle, Klein detoured to Jurgen's door and used the key that he had been given to open it.

At that moment, Brody the black cat was already quietly sitting behind the door, staring at the visitor with his pair of dark, round green eyes. The room was dark and silent, bleak and lonely.

Klein squatted down and tried to touch Brody's head, but Brody quickly moved back and flung his hand away in disgust.

Shaking his head with laughter, he got up, opened the valve, and lit the gas lamp. Following Jurgen's descriptions, he went to the cupboard to find the food that had already been prepared.

Then, he went into the kitchen, lit the kettle to boil some water, and prepared Brody's favorite dish, boiled chicken breast.

The black cat followed him in, and with an agile leap, it reached the counter. It sat beside him and watched him without making a fuss.

Klein glanced at it, rehearsing the shredding of chicken breast in his mind while he chatted with Brody, "You must miss Mrs. Doris, right?

"Are you worried about her condition…

"Lawyer Jurgen didn't come home today. Are you feeling lonely and uncomfortable on your own? Do you feel like you lack a sense of belonging and are exhausted…”

…

As he spoke, Klein's voice slowly faded into silence.

Brody the black cat remained sitting there, quietly watching him. It didn't make any noise, nor did it cry out.

…

Audrey was invited to tea at Lady Norma's house.

"These are the mysticism experts that I mentioned." Lady Norma introduced the distinguished guests warmly, "This is Mr. Hilbert Alucard, a psychologist and a jewelry designer. He's very talented. This is Miss Escalante Oseleka. She's a doctor for mental health, what we usually call a psychiatrist."

Hilbert Alucard was a man in his forties. He looked to be of Southern Continent descent, and his skin was brown.

His brown hair, blue eyes, and facials features weren't particularly outstanding. He gave off a silent and reserved feeling.

Escalante Oseleka was a baby-faced lady who looked like a young girl studying at a public or grammar school even though she was already a psychiatrist.

She was three or four centimeters shorter than Audrey, and she had long raven-black hair that reached her waist and a pair of lake-blue eyes.

Audrey exchanged a few pleasantries with him, then she sat down, keenly aware that Alucard and Escalante were observing her.

She didn't use her Telepathist abilities, and she pretended to know nothing. While initiating topics in the field of mysticism, she constantly paid attention to her emotions, ensuring that they were in the most logical state.

*I can't let them find out that I'm already a Beyonder, and that I have already taken the Spectator and Telepathist potions… *Audrey knew exactly what role she was to play today.

Unlike the silent Alucard, Escalante was quite a conversationalist. After a few rounds of exchanges, she asked, "Do you know about Major Years and

Major Months?"

"No, I haven't heard of those," Audrey cautiously answered, using only the knowledge she had obtained from her interaction with mysticism enthusiasts.

In fact, I've already learned from Mr. Hanged Man what a Major Year and Major Month is.… she added with a smile in her heart.

"A Major Year refers to the number of years it takes for the planet to deviate from its axis, totaling 25,920 years. In the field of mysticism, this is considered a complete cycle that goes from the beginning to the end. A Major Month refers to the number of years it takes for this deviation to pass through one of the twelve constellations. Each Major Month represents 2,160 years. During the transition of Major Months, terrible disasters will occur. And according to calculations, we aren't too many years away from the end of the current Major Moon…" Escalante spoke with confidence, keeping the atmosphere harmonious.

Audrey hid the fact that she knew a lot as she asked the wrong questions from time to time in a curious tone.

With this, time passed quickly. At the end of tea time, Alucard and Escalante stood up at the same time to take their leave, leaving Lady Norma's house.

This caused Audrey to be rather disappointed. She imagined that they would eventually hint at the matter regarding the Psychology Alchemists, but in the end, they didn't say anything.

*Yes, as a secret organization that cannot be exposed, the examination of candidates can't be that simple and direct… From the looks of it, they will need to interact with me a few times and observe me in secret before they decide whether or not they want to reveal information to me and recruit me into the organization… That's good too, I can report this to Mr. Fool! *Audrey quickly understood the underlying reasons.

She then took her leave, and Lady Norma walked her to the door, smiled, and said, "Audrey, I see that you're also interested in psychology? Why not consider being a psychiatrist before you get married?

"Count Hall and his wife are followers of the Goddess. They should be able to support you in doing such things."

Among aristocrats, unless there was a financial crisis or other special situations, coming to an agreement on marriage required a long process. Only after careful consideration and comparisons would they be able to make a decision. This was because this wasn't only a matter between two youngsters, but it also involved the alliance and mutual assistance of the two families.

Therefore, although aristocratic women were able to officially enter social events under the direction of the queen after the age of 18, proclaiming their adulthood and consideration for marriage, they often started a family after the age of 26 according to statistics.

Similarly, the average age of a male aristocrat's entry into politics for the first time was 28.5 years.

In other words, Audrey would have about eight years to do what she liked after she reached adulthood.

The Church of the Evernight Goddess had always encouraged female believers to go out to work and engage in certain occupations. In the aristocratic circles, many young ladies and women became literary critics, musicians, pianists, painters, etc.

*Is this a test? *Audrey smiled faintly and replied, "I will need to read more books in that case."

Actually, she had always felt that it wasn't too safe for the members of the Psychology Alchemists to become psychologists or psychiatrists because the upper echelons of the official organizations, such as the Nighthawks and

the Mandated Punishers, likely knew of the acting method. Therefore, they would definitely pay more attention to this group of people.

Lady Norma seemed pleased with her answer and nodded with a smile.

"Escalante and Alucard are both good teachers."

"Well, maybe I could consider asking Miss Escalante to be my home tutor on psychology." Audrey nodded obediently.

…

When Klein got up on the early Sunday morning, he found that the map of Backlund on the coffee table in the living room had been circled in several places, and they weren't too far apart. Therefore, he spent the rest of the morning carefully familiarizing himself with the surroundings, figuring out exactly where the buildings were located, and where the nearest cathedral was.

In the afternoon, having time to spare again, he went to the Quelaag Club to practice his shooting and Beyonder powers.

As soon as he entered the hall, he saw the surgeon, Aaron Ceres, hobbling out slowly from the buffet cafeteria with a crutch.

After greeting him, he asked out of concern, "How have you been lately, Aaron? Has your luck improved?"

Aaron, who was born with a blank face, smiled sincerely.

"At least I'm not that unlucky anymore.

"I followed your suggestion, went to the cathedral, and told the bishop about the matter. He told me to go directly to the confessional to pray to the Goddess.

"I actually fell asleep while praying, but I felt like the Goddess had bestowed me with a peaceful state. After that, my luck has been normal!

"Praise the Lady!"

He drew a crimson moon on his chest.

According to my experience, it was likely a particular Sequence 7 Nightmare who caused you to fall into a deep sleep. Then, a Nighthawk, who specializes in rituals, quickly set up an altar, prayed to the Goddess, and neutralized your misfortune… Klein smiled.

"That's great!"

At that moment, Aaron looked at him and said, "Sherlock, I've always felt that you weren't very pious in your belief of the God of Steam and Machinery. Why don't you change your faith? Look at me, a perfect example. Put your faith in the Goddess!"

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CHAPTER 340
PAST

*A-aren't you making things difficult for me? *Upon hearing Aaron's request, Klein almost drew the crimson moon on his chest, but he ultimately resisted the urge and replied very seriously, "Perhaps there's something about my behavior that has led you to misunderstand.

"But I have to tell you that faith is something that cannot be changed after it's decided upon."

Aaron immediately raised his arms and made an apologetic gesture.

"I'm sorry that I misunderstood your faithfulness. I shouldn't have taken your faith as a joke.

"Alright, our differences in faith do not prevent us from becoming friends."

Klein wiped away the fake expression he put on and smiled.

"That's not true in Feysac and Feynapotter. They can only accept one faith."

In comparison, with so many Churches coexisting for more than fourteen hundred years, Loen and Intis are much more open in this respect.

Before Aaron could answer, he casually changed the subject.

"Did you see Will Auceptin again? I'm referring to the kid that had one of his legs amputated, the one who said that your luck would turn for the worse."

He was certain that the Nighthawks would follow the clues provided by Aaron, so he wondered what the outcome was. He was curious if the child who changed Aaron's luck still had the tarot card in his possession.

"No, I haven't seen him since he left the hospital." Aaron shook his head firmly.

*What a pity. The Nighthawks can find his address according to the hospital's records, and it's not convenient for me to be involved… Of course, the child might've moved away long ago. *After a brief exchange with Aaron, Klein decided to head for the underground shooting range, familiarizing himself with his free revolver with ordinary bullets.

At this moment, two more acquaintances came in. One was a member of the National Atmospheric Pollution Council, Coim Company shareholder, Ma'am Mary, and the other was Klein's landlord, Stelyn Sammer. They were all wearing relatively light skirts, making them look much younger.

According to the rules of the club, each member could only bring in one additional person; therefore, Mary's maid and her bodyguard were left in the reception hall.

Klein politely greeted them and praised them out of courtesy, "Ladies, you two are as beautiful as ever today, and yet there is a beauty that's different from your usual beauty."

Having come into contact with a lot of important figures recently, Mary smiled and said, "Roselle said that exercise is a necessity of life, and Stelyn is always at home, dealing with trivial matters. Even when she's out, she would be participating in parties and listening to operas. Her health is much worse than it used to be, so I brought her here to play tennis and squash."

With her high cheekbones, she looked around and saw a member of the House of Commons and two other Members of Parliament of the greater Backlund area. She then turned to Stelyn and said, "I see someone I know.

Excuse me while I head over to greet them. You can wait for me at the library."

"Alright." Compared to Mary, Stelyn was clearly much prettier, but towards this lady, she seemed very respectful and docile.

After Mary had gone some distance away, she slightly raised her chin, looked at Klein and asked, "Mr. Moriarty, you seem very busy these days?"

"Yes, I was working with a lot of detectives to help the police investigate the serial murder case. We made a certain contribution and received quite a sizable reward," Klein answered truthfully.

Stelyn covered her mouth with her hand.

"Really?

"What did the murderer look like? Why did he kill those ladies? The newspapers had been very vague."

"I'm sorry, I have to comply with the confidentiality clause." Klein deftly made up an excuse.

It's not like I can tell you that it had a body of black fur; a smooth, glistening tail; and that it likes to run on all fours… Klein lampooned inwardly.

Stelyn nodded regretfully, and then she asked curiously, "So how much did you get?"

"It was split among quite a number of us." Klein didn't answer directly.

"Was there fifty pounds?" Stelyn pressed.

"Yes." Klein nodded* "honestly."*

Stelyn Sammer smiled.

"You earn a lot more than I imagined. You really are a capable detective."

"No, it might take years to come across such a case." Klein smiled and shook his head.

"No matter what, you have proven your ability." Stelyn's eyes looked like they were thinking as she said, "Next Sunday, Luke and I will be hosting a party at home. I hope you can come, um, sorry. I was very presumptuous. I'll have my maid send the invitation to you. Heh heh, there will be a lot of unmarried ladies at the party, and their fathers or mothers will have decent jobs, and their families will earn more than 200 pounds a year. Some of them have part-time jobs that they can do at home, such as being a typist. They're all very excellent women."

Th-this is a blind date party… Mrs. Stelyn has approved of my ability to make money as a detective, so she plans on introducing me to a girl? But in her eyes, am I only fit to be with a woman at that level? Many thoughts flashed through Klein's mind, but after considering the need to maintain their neighborly friendliness and the trouble of preparing his own dinner, he agreed with a smile.

"If all goes well, I'll be there on time."

Stelyn smiled and said, "Then Luke and I will be awaiting your visit."

She left without another word and entered the small library of the club, while Klein proceeded to practice his shooting and Beyonder powers in the small, enclosed shooting range.

…

At 9 o'clock at night, Klein was sitting at his desk, watching as the crimson moon gradually pierced through the clouds, revealing a full body.

The water-like, light red "veil" slowly spread out, and time passed by the minute. When it was quarter past ten, he heard illusory pleas that seemed layered.

Klein easily guessed that it was from Miss Magician.

Closing the curtains, he switched off the lights, took four steps counterclockwise, and went above the gray mist. There, he reached out to touch the shrinking and expanding crimson star.

In a split-second, the hazy figure of Fors appeared on the chair with the symbol of a layered door.

She let out a sigh of relief, stood up, and bowed.

"Honorable Mr. Fool, you have saved me once again."

"That's not something to worry about," Klein replied in a very light, casual tone.

Fors was left speechless and sat down again.

She was considering what had just happened, so she didn't say anything. As for Klein, he didn't take the initiative to bring up any subjects in order to maintain his image.

Within the towering palace which looked like a giant's residence, the silence quickly transformed into the main theme.

When Fors snapped back to her senses, she suddenly felt that this atmosphere was a little oppressive and uncomfortable.

*During the gathering, there's still Miss Justice, Mr. World, and company. There was no need to worry about complete silence, but now, there's only Mr. Fool and me. What should I do? This pressure is stifling! I need to say something, I have to. I can't just sit here like an idiot… That's Mr. Fool! He

certainly wouldn't care about anything, but I'm so nervous and restricted! *Fors suddenly felt as though she had found herself alone with her boss when she first entered the workforce.

Although Klein wasn't a Spectator, he could clearly see Miss Magician's restraint and uneasiness. He smiled and said, "Maybe you can tell me how you became a Beyonder."

For example, how you obtained the Apprentice formula and that bracelet… Klein silently added the real question he was trying to get by.

Fors relaxed a little and recalled.

"That was almost three years ago. I just graduated from Backlund Medical School.

"With my father's help, I entered a private clinic with pretty good benefits. Heh, my father had already settled down in East Balam back then.

"Ever since the safe sea route to the Southern Continent was discovered, the outstanding youth of the kingdom started spreading their footprints to every corner of the land. My father, as a low-level military officer, went to East Balam to chase after wealth and power. My mother and I were left behind in Backlund to live like widows. Heh heh, it would take months before a distant letter sent by boat would arrive.

"This situation isn't uncommon in the kingdom. I knew an old gentleman who had five children, but they were either in the archipelago, Western Balam, the Paz Valley, or the Haagenti Plains. They have their own career, their own family, and their own wealth, but they've forgotten that there is a father waiting for their return all this time.

"When I was in grammar school, my mother fell seriously ill. I had no choice but to helplessly watch her die on the hospital bed, and it took my father a month to answer my letter, telling me that he had a new family and

a new life in East Balam. He gave me all his property in Backlund plus some money. I think he felt a little guilty."

As a best-selling novel writer, Fors had mastered the art of rambling.

Since Klein had nothing to do, he listened quietly without interrupting.

Phew. Fors exhaled and continued, "Anyway, my father introduced me to Yosifov Clinic through the veterans' club. The salary there was really good, and I was doing pretty well, but I was a little anxious about the future. Hence, I worked hard to learn from the senior doctors and worked hard to save money until I met an old lady who came to see me regularly.

"She was very lonely and childless, and her partner had passed away ten years ago. I had some sympathy for her, so I often talked to her and accompanied her.

"Once, I was surprised to find that she was able to walk through walls, which opened a whole new world to me.

"That old lady said that it was something her husband left her. She vaguely mentioned that as long as one wasn't a member of some family, there was apparently no curse.

"Not long after, she was so ill that she was on the verge of passing away. She asked me if I wanted to become someone like her. I was very young then, and I still had a lot of fantasies in my head. I agreed without any hesitation.

"She gave me the formula and told me to watch her body after she died and take away the glowing object that would suddenly appear. And this was the thing she left me which could be used as the main ingredient of a potion.

"Also, she gave me this bracelet, telling me not to use it unless I'm in absolute danger. She also told me not to pay too much attention to the ravings during the full moon.

"Unfortunately, I was ultimately unable to avoid danger. After using it once, the full moon's raving became worse."

It seems like that was a widow of a particular Abraham… She had used her own experience to prove that the "curse" only existed in the bloodline… Klein nodded.

"Once you become a High-Sequence Beyonder, the ravings wouldn't have much of an effect on you."

"I hope so." Although she didn't believe she could become a High-Sequence Beyonder, she believed in Mr. Fool.

…

It was Monday again, and as soon as Klein got up, he went downstairs and saw an open sheet of paper on the coffee table in the living room.

"Effective."

That's good… Klein immediately let out a sigh of relief.

At fifteen minutes to three in the afternoon, he promptly went above the gray fog to "prepare" for the new Tarot Club gathering.

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CHAPTER 341
PRIVATE COMMUNICATION

The sight of the towering stone pillars that supported a high dome and the mottled and ancient long table that appeared to have been placed there since hundreds, if not more than a thousand years ago entered the eyes… Although Audrey Hall had seen this scene many times, she would still feel a kind of shock that came from the bottom of her heart the moment she arrived above the gray fog.

Out of the corner of her eye, she scanned the surroundings and didn't see any new members. She then looked up and bowed to the person in the thick gray fog.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Fool~"

As she spoke, she suddenly saw a card covered with a complicated pattern on the table to the right of The Fool.

It was lying there quietly, casually, like an ordinary object.

*I-is that the Card of Blasphemy? A Card of Blasphemy that hides one of the paths of the divine! *Audrey immediately understood. After The Fool nodded in response, she subconsciously glanced at The Hanged Man, The Sun, and The Magician, and she found that they had also noticed the card that didn't exist in the past.

*However, their eyes and actions revealed their doubts and astonishment, as well as their inevitable conjectures. After all, a card that could be placed by the mysterious and lofty Mr. Fool was definitely not an ordinary item… Well, Mr. World's reaction is a little odd. He's not even looking there. Is he

able to hide his thoughts so well? Is he really the nemesis of a Spectator and Telepathist? *Audrey quickly decided that, other than Mr. Fool, the Card of Blasphemy was known only to herself.

This made her feel quite proud. It was a feeling like sharing a secret with her parents when she was young while she kept her two elder brothers in the dark.

That's a Card of Blasphemy created by Emperor Roselle, a treasure that countless Beyonders in the mysterious world dream of! Audrey took the initiative to raise her hand after The Magician, The Sun, and the others did their greetings.

"Honorable Mr. Fool, I have something I would like to report to you alone."

Alone? Alger frowned slightly as he subconsciously tried to guess at the content but was without any clue.

Derrick and the others were also curious, but they didn't think too much about it.

Klein nodded slightly and said, "Sure."

Frankly, he had no idea what Miss Justice was going to report to him.

After waiting two seconds, he blocked off the senses of the rest of the members and gestured to Justice.

Audrey sat with a dignified posture and said with a sincere attitude, "Mr. Fool, as I had asked to purchase the Spectator formula at a Beyonder gathering, there has been two suspected members of the Psychology Alchemists who came into contact with me recently through certain nobles.

"I'm inclined to join them, but only if I can guarantee my own safety.

"What is your opinion on this? I've attached great importance to this."

Psychology Alchemists… From the evidence from various sources of information, it's not considered an evil organization. At present, they might not have a deity that they believe in. Its main mission is to explore and research one's mind, consciousness, psyche, and spirituality. It's more like a scientific self-help group. Of course, among the Orthodox Churches, it's also a form of sacrilege since they believe that everyone's spirit belongs to god. And according to Daxter Guderian, the upper echelons of the Psychology Alchemists definitely have an inclination—the original Creator, the god that created everything, and they worship "Him" to a certain extent, a rather primitive form of worship… Many thoughts flashed past Klein's mind as he finally said with a smile, "If you think it's suitable, you can do so.

"If you encounter a problem, you can seek help from the Tarot Club."

"Thank you for your suggestion." Audrey instantly felt relieved.

Klein thought for a moment and added using a calm and leisurely tone, "Inside the Psychology Alchemists, there are people planted by the Churches, such as informants of the Mandated Punishers and Nighthawks. You have to know how to hide and conceal yourself."

Mr. Fool is so nice to remind me to be careful… Audrey slightly bent her eyes and replied with a shallow smile, "In the future, there will also be an informant from the Tarot Club inside the Psychology Alchemists."

…Miss Justice, you haven't even joined, and you're already thinking of betraying them… Klein silently drew an invisible crimson moon for the Psychology Alchemists.

After reporting the matter of the Psychology Alchemists, Audrey wasn't in a hurry to end the conversation. Instead, she said, "Mr. Fool, I've memorized another two pages of Roselle's diary."

That was also why she had asked to speak to him in private. If she had conjured Roselle's diary and given it to Mr. Fool under the witness of The

Magician, Fors, she could imagine that at the end of the gathering, Fors would immediately come to her and borrow those Roselle's notes she had bought in the past. And with regards to this, the Goddess could prove that Mr. Fool had seen them all!

*I forgot to do so previously. One of these two days, I'll find an opportunity to tell Fors that the Roselle notes I bought were torn apart by Susie. Yes, torn apart, into pieces that cannot be restored! I'm sorry, Susie… *Audrey repented in her heart.

"Very good." Klein knocked gratefully on the edge of the long bronze table to help Miss Justice conjure the diary pages.

When he had the two pages in hand, he cast his eyes over, only to have his smile gradually stiffen.

The first line of the journal read: "6th March. Dammit, I'm almost constipated from eating the food here!"

…

This is what I saw at the Roselle Memorial Exhibition… Klein hid his expression and turned to the second page. He found that the contents were still the complaints and novel experiences of Roselle's early days of his transmigration. They were of no practical use.

He controlled his expression and smiled.

"Do you wish to deduct from the gold pounds you have yet to pay, or do you wish to get something else in return?"

Audrey said without any hesitation, "Mr. Fool, I would like to know which path of the divine that Card of Blasphemy is."

You really treat money as dirt… Klein silently sighed, as he didn't hide his smile as he said, "That is the Dark Emperor card.

"The corresponding Sequence 9 is Lawyer."

So that's what it is… After receiving her answer, Audrey felt abnormally satisfied.

After the private conversation ended, The Magician, Fors, looked eagerly at The World who sat right at the other end.

"Mr. World, I will try my best to gather a mystical item or powerful Beyonder weapon in the Sun domain."

"What kind of deal did you two make in private?" Despite feeling very familiar with Fors, Audrey wasn't aware of this, so she couldn't help but ask.

Fors let out a sigh and said, "Mr. World has helped me find the formula to Trickmaster."

Mr. World sure is capable at finding formulas… Does he have extensive and reliable resources and connections in this field? Audrey listened in surprise.

The Hanged Man, Alger, concealed his solemn expression, once again reevaluating The World and raising his assessment of him.

As for Derrick, he felt rather expectant. He hoped that after he finished digesting the Light Suppliant potion, Mr. World would be able to easily find for him the formula for Sequence 7, Solar High Priest.

The World laughed hoarsely when faced with the numerous gazes that were staring at him.

"Miss Magician, before you purchase it, it's best that you chant Mr. Fool's honorable name and request that 'He' pass the relevant information to me. Yes, I have already sought Mr. Fool's permission and 'He' has agreed to help us.

"If I'm not satisfied with the items that you have set your eyes on, perhaps I will consider switching to another request."

Klein now had three alternatives for the items in the Sun domain, so he planned to compare them before making any finalization.

One of them was the brooch which Old Mister Eye of Wisdom had mentioned. It had the effect of purifying and warding off evil spirits and letting the wearer use a portion of the spells in the Sun domain. The negative effect was that the wearer would never feel cool, forever stuck in a hot and irritable state.

Klein found the mystical item only okay, and since the price could be close to 2,000 pounds, he was unable to afford it, even if he had sold the Briber formula; therefore, he planned to wait a few days. If Miss Magician and the lady with the Artisan backing her couldn't find something better, then he would cash out the formula and buy the brooch.

"Okay, I'll give you the information no later than tomorrow." Fors had confirmed that Mr. A would be hosting a gathering that very night, but she had given herself another day for any unexpected outcomes.

When the conversation was over, Alger looked around and said, as if he had already prepared a draft, "I recently took on an investigative mission. I'm not sure if you have any relevant leads.

"In the past two to three years, many original native tribes in the Southern Continent have been plundered and all their people were taken away. In the various colonies, on the islands at sea, some slaves have also mysteriously escaped.

"Such situations have not happened in a long time since the countries of the Northern Continent abolished the slave trade. Have you all heard anything that's relevant?"

His eyes swept over Justice, The Magician, and The World, but he didn't look at The Sun.

How could a boy trapped in the City of Silver inside the Forsaken Land of the Gods know about what was happening outside?!

Audrey carefully recalled the conversations she had heard at the many noble gatherings, but after a while, she said, "No, I've never even heard of such a thing."

The Magician and The World shook their heads.

Is this indicating that slave trading in the black market is flourishing again? Why would they need so many slaves? Klein sat at the end of the long bronze table and thought about the matter suspiciously.

Seeing that no one could provide any clues, and how Mr. Fool showed no interest whatsoever by not interrupting, he said without changing his expression, "You can attempt to seek out the formula for Wind-blessed.

"I will provide you with payment that would absolutely be enough to satisfy you."

*The formula for the Wind-blessed? He's almost done digesting the potion of the Seafarer… *Klein activated his Spirit Vision and glanced at The Hanged Man. Sure enough, he found that the surface layer of his Astral Projection was not only pure blue like the sea, but it also had slight ripples, as if slowly undulating.

…If I do the math, it took Mr. Hanged Man nearly four months to digest the Seafarer potion. He's often at sea… Audrey also made a judgment based on what she had observed.

Another point that Fors paid more attention to was that Mr. Hanged Man was likely a Sequence 7!

A Mid-Sequence Beyonder… she nodded indiscernibly and said to herself.

After The Hanged Man finished announcing his mission, Derrick raised his hand and said with some apprehension, "I've been assigned to go on a mission. I will be heading to the half-destroyed temple, that I mentioned previously, in the near future, yes, the one related to the Fallen Creator.

"The leader responsible for this operation is Shepherd Elder Lovia.

"Do you have any suggestions?"

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CHAPTER 342
THE OLD FOX ALGER

Suggestions? My advice is to stay as far away as possible… Upon hearing The Sun's question, Klein instantly had such an answer in his mind.

However, in order to preserve the image of The Fool and see what the others would suggest, he remained silent and did not manipulate The World to speak.

After a short moment of silence, Alger turned his head to look at The Sun. He said in a staid and gentle voice, "You have provided too little information, so it's difficult for us to give any useful advice.

"The only thing we know of regarding that semi-destroyed temple is the presence of the True Creator, or in other words, the Fallen Creator's unique statue. We don't know what else is there, so naturally, we aren't able to make much of an analysis of the situation."

The Fallen Creator is indeed the True Creator… To think that there's faith in the True Creator in the City of Silver where The Sun lives. There's even a temple built… The Magician Fors listened with relish and almost wanted to write it down. Justice Audrey waited for The Sun's description of the strange temple in anticipation.

Derrick nodded, his eyes looking up for a few seconds before he said, "In addition to the statue, there are also many incomplete murals with terrifying evil spirits lingering around. However, they have already been eliminated by the exploration team led by two elders from the six-member council…

"I've yet to see those murals with my own eyes. It's said that it records the prophecy of the end of days and how the Fallen Creator will save his believers, as well as the corresponding bloody ritual…

"In the corner of a certain mural, there are some strange characters that appear to be evolved from Jotun. After some deciphering, a few elders believe that they meant: Rose Redemption.

"This might a code name for the original muralist. It might also be the code name of the organization that built the temple and the city.

"According to the Chief's judgment, these murals are at least a thousand years old.

"The thousand years I'm referring to is the one that you know, uh, but I'm not completely sure. In the City of Silver, w-we use the frequency of lightning to demarcate our days. It's considered night when the lightning eases up and day when there's plenty of lightning. One cycle is a day, and the four seasons only exist in books, so we can't grasp the specific number of days. Only the Chief can confirm that."

At this point in The Sun's story, Fors suspected that she was listening to a fairytale.

A city without the sun, without the red moon, without day and night or changes in the seasons, it sounded unreal no matter how she listened to it! Only fairytales or novels would make such daring descriptions!

And the author has to smoke cannabis and be in a state of psychotic madness in order to create such a city… The first thought that came to her mind after her astonishment was,* I want to use the City of Silver as a blueprint for a novel!*

However, she soon gave up on this idea, for she didn't know what the City of Silver really implied. She wasn't sure if it was a secret that was collectively concealed by the Seven Churches, and she was afraid that as

soon as the book was published, she, as the author, would have the Nighthawks knocking on her door, claiming to collect the copper pennies in her gas meter.

So that's the kind of environment which the City of Silver has. Hmm, The Sun also often mentions of monsters lurking deep in the darkness… Unfortunately, I'm only at Sequence 8. Otherwise, I would really like to ask Mr. Fool to send me there for an adventure. No, Audrey, you are no longer an innocent girl. You should be aware of how much danger is involved in this matter… Justice Audrey switched between letting her thoughts run wild while also engaging in self-reflection.

At least a thousand years? The Aurora Order hasn't been in existence for more than three centuries. It might not even be two centuries old. It's unlikely to be built by them… Hmm, perhaps the True Creator's faith had begun as early as the Fifth Epoch or even the Fourth Epoch. However, the organization that revered "Him" wasn't the Aurora Order… In the next one to two thousand years, the seven Orthodox Churches have been repressing it, causing the True Creator's believers to be in a crisis. The Churches have destroyed them again and again, and finally, they had resurrected themselves as the Aurora Order? Klein, who had some guesses, made his seating posture and state appear unchanged.

Derrick paused for two seconds and continued, "A preliminary clean up of the terrifying monsters in the city ruins and the half-destroyed temple has been done. Our mission this time is to explore the underground parts of the temple.

"Do you have any suggestions? With your understanding of the Fallen Creator, what should I pay attention to?"

"My suggestion?" Alger said without almost any hesitation, "My advice is absolutely not to go!

"The Fallen Creator is a true evil god. Even if 'His' temple has been destroyed, it might still contain abnormal danger which cannot be easily

detected. If the one leading your team is one of the other elders of the six-member council, then there's nothing wrong if you insist on going. It will just be risky. But you just mentioned that the person in charge of this matter is Shepherd Lovia, and the True Creator is the deity standing at the peak of this Beyonder pathway! Therefore, absolutely do not go," Alger added.

Your suggestion is the same as mine, but it doesn't require The Sun to describe the half-destroyed temple. You could've come up with this conclusion with the conditions at the beginning… I understand. Mr. Hanged Man, you were doing it on purpose. This way, you got a rough idea of the state of the temple without paying anything… You're really just bullying a little kid… Sitting at the end of the table, Klein leisurely reached out his hand to support his forehead.

The Sun was silent for a few seconds, and seemingly having been put in a tough spot, he said, "But the mission is compulsory."

The Hanged Man chuckled and said, "Nothing is necessary.

"Will you still be participating in patrols before this mission? Find an opportunity and deliberately let the monsters injure you. As for how serious it should be, you can reference the past cases in the City of Silver."

At this moment, Audrey read a message from Sun's eyes and movements.

"That actually works?"

After a brief period of surprise and confusion, Derrick frowned and said, "But I don't have any patrolling missions in the near future…”

Alger sneered.

"You can always pretend to be on the brink of losing control. No, to be precise, you can push yourself to the brink of losing control. Under such a situation, I believe the higher-ups of the City of Silver would definitely not bring 'dangerous baggage' with them on the exploratory mission, right?

"There is a trick; as long as you keep your spirituality in an empty state for two days, you will begin to hear auditory hallucinations and show signs of losing control. If you stop suppressing yourself, then your situation will improve in a week, and you wouldn't really lose control.

"Of course, your City of Silver definitely has some solutions and contingencies to cure those who show signs of losing control. Your recovery would definitely be quick, so you need to time yourself perfectly. It's best if you start doing so two to three days before you set off."

Derrick was stunned for quite a while before he muttered to himself, "Yes, those who show signs of losing control will be placed under control and be quarantined underground in the spire, where they will be treated with medicine, rituals, and mystical items. If the situation isn't too serious, then they only need to consume medicine…"

*Sigh, an honest and good kid has been corrupted by an old fox just like that… But, Mr. Hanged Man, how do you know of this trick of pushing yourself to the brink of losing control? If you use this trick often, losing control might really happen… *Klein sighed in his heart.

Audrey was dumbstruck when she heard this. She felt as though she'd been educated.

Seeing that The Sun was still hesitating as though he didn't wish to lie to the City of Silver's elders, Alger slowly asked, "Do the other elders of the six-member council know that the Fallen Creator controls the Shepherd pathway?"

"They don't." Derrick shook his head honestly.

Alger asked again, "Do you think it's possible that Shepherd Elder Lovia will do harm to the City of Silver? Just answer yes or no; there's no need for any explanations."

"…Yes." Derrick finally couldn't lie to himself.

Alger chuckled and said, "So, you are the only one who knows of this matter, but you haven't found a way to warn the other elders of the six-member council, right?"

"Yes." Derrick's expression grew heavier.

Alger changed his seating posture as he leaned back.

"This mission carries immense risk. This is something you know. If you die in that half-destroyed temple, then who will be able to find a way to expose the strangeness of Shepherd Lovia? Who can save the City of Silver from this crisis? The Fallen Creator is a real evil god!"

"You are not pretending to lose control or lying to others for your own personal interests. You are doing so to save the City of Silver!

"Comparing your honor to that, which is more important?"

Derrick clenched his teeth and nodded solemnly.

"I understand.

"Thank you, Mr. Hanged Man."

Audrey and Fors suddenly had the urge to facepalm themselves.

He really is an easily fooled child… However, that's good too; it prevents the Tarot Club from losing members in the near future… Klein sighed silently as he controlled The World to say, "I have a question to ask Mr. Sun.

"This could involve a transaction.

"Therefore, I'm requesting a private exchange."

Klein quickly switched back to himself and nodded indifferently.

"Sure."

After the others were screened, The World looked at The Sun and asked, "Does the City of Silver have a way to remove an evil god's mental corruption on a Beyonder characteristic?"

This was something Klein had wanted to ask a few times before, but considering that Justice and the others might also be interested, and if The Sun was unable to answer questions that involved an evil god, then all eyes would likely be cast toward the godlike Mr. Fool; therefore, he had restrained his impulse. It was only moments ago when he got inspiration from Miss Justice and came up with the idea of communicating privately.

"We have never encountered an evil god." Derrick answered earnestly, "We can only separate a Rampager's mental corruption from a Beyonder characteristic."

That's it! This might actually work; after all, I have the gray fog… Klein suppressed his joy and made The World speak, "What do you need in return?"

"It's not a matter of compensation." Sun shook his head. "That method and the corresponding knowledge requires me to be at least the Captain of a patrol team, or even a strong warrior like the Captain of an exploration team in order to be privy to such matters. The former requires being Sequence 7, while the latter requires a minimum of Sequence 6."

Phew… Klein sighed, letting The World hoarsely say, "I hope that you can attain the qualifications as soon as possible."

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CHAPTER 343
BY ONESELF

After the private communication between The World and The Sun, the Tarot Gathering began its free discussion session. Audrey asked with great interest about the unique scenery of the sea and of any strange happenings, while Alger gave selective descriptions according to his own knowledge.

Fors listened quietly and was inspired to write a novel about a Pirate King, of how he captures a female passenger and has a complex love affair with her, a fantasy that coexisted with reality.

Derrick could only imagine what the sea looked like based on the paintings in the City of Silver and the corresponding words.

In the end, Klein, whose spirituality was gradually drained, announced the end of the Tarot Gathering. After which, he quickly returned to the real world and made up for it with a nap.

…

Half past seven at night. In Empress Borough. Inside a particular noble's house.

Fors put on a hooded robe. After so many days, she was once again attending the gathering organized by Mr. A.

She sat quietly in a corner, and whilst pretending to casually survey her surroundings, she noticed that Mr. A, who was sitting alone on the sofa, seemed a little different from before.

This wasn't a change in appearance or temperament, because the other party's face was completely hidden in the shadow of his hood, preventing her from making out anything.

The difference she felt was an almost intuitive feeling.

Mr. A is no longer as carefree and indifferent as before, with him always looking at everyone in a supercilious manner. The current him seems to be very repressed—like he's trying his best to control something. He feels a lot more dangerous now.

In the past, Mr. A was a mountain. Now, he's more like a reared up snake, sticking out its tongue vociferously… The best-selling writer, Fors, suddenly felt grateful that she hadn't gotten Xio to come with her since she needed to hide matters about the Tarot Club and not let her know that she was looking for something in the Sun domain.

This way, even if there are any accidents, my escape would be much easier… She rotated the bracelet which only had two stones left.

She was in no hurry to write down her request to hand over to the attendant. Instead, she patiently observed for a while.

It wasn't that she was naturally cautious, but the lessons of the past had left her with deep impressions. The two stones on her bracelet were evidence of this.

After waiting for more than ten minutes, she finally picked up a piece of paper and a pen in front of her and wrote in deliberately distorted handwriting: "Seeking to buy mystical items or powerful Beyonder weapons in the Sun domain."

After handing the note to the attendant, Fors looked around again, but she couldn't find the Eternal Blazing Sun believer, who had helped with the purification and exorcism ritual, among the disguised or masked figures.

Trades took place as the attendants shuttled about. The entire hall remained quiet and orderly.

After an exchange in the middle of the gathering, Fors's request was added to the two chalkboards right in front.

Not long after, she received a reply from the attendant.

A small slip of white paper was filled with dense words:

"Mystical item: Band of Light ring. It can make the wearer an Envoy of Light, an attendant of the Sun. They will be immune to various diseases and wield sacred powers. The wearer can summon blinding light and use several spells in the Sun domain. It can purify all dead spirits in a fifty-meter radius. It is the nemesis of such creatures.

"If the wearer is acknowledged by the ring, they will be enhanced; otherwise, they will be weakened.

"The only problem is that if the wearer utilizes it too often, they will slowly become a believer of the Eternal Blazing Sun and slowly defend the doctrines and praise the Sun from the bottom of their hearts.

"If you wish to obtain it, then please pay me 9,000 in cash at once. I can wait for you to raise it."

9,000 pounds? Fors's mouth gaped open, as though the other party was robbing her.

This was a huge amount of wealth that she wouldn't be able to borrow, even if she asked someone to lend it to her!

Aside from the deposit for the assassination of the Intis Ambassador, the amount of money she had seen so far combined had never been this high!

A person with 9,000 pounds in cash was considered a tycoon, even in Backlund!

Although I know that mystical items are expensive, I never expected them to be this expensive… Does he plan on getting the 9,000 pounds and not participate in Beyonder gatherings anymore and leave the circle so as to enjoy life in peace? For a moment, she didn't dare to reply to the seller.

She pretended that nothing had happened and listened for nearly ten minutes, but when she received no additional response or response to relatively inexpensive Beyonder weapons, she got up and went to the washroom.

After confirming that no one was around, she closed the toilet door and sat down on the toilet. She recited Mr. Fool's honorable name, told him in prayer about what had just happened, and asked him to pass it on to The World.

Klein, who had heard the layered, illusory sounds, quickly went above the endless gray fog and gained a basic understanding of the situation.

*9,000 pounds? *He mouthed the number, his expression twisting slightly.

After silently calculating the amount of money he could raise in a short period of time, he let out a breath, conjured the fake person, The World, and manipulated him to give a response:

"The negative effect of this mystical item is too serious. I do not wish to be a believer of the Sun.

"You don't have to worry about this anymore. We'll transact using cash instead.

"Pay 450 pounds and you'll get the formula for Trickmaster."

The moment he finished his sentence, he cut the connection. Watching as The World disappeared, he raised his hand to rub his forehead and muttered to himself, "Next, I'll have to see the information on what kind of items that Barbarian lady can gather…

"Otherwise, I can only purchase that brooch from Eye of Wisdom."

…

In the washroom, Fors let out a sigh of relief. She indicated that she would hold the sacrificial ritual as soon as she got back.

It's a pity that I don't know the formula for now. Otherwise, I could take the opportunity to see if there are any Beyonder ingredients I need… She returned to the hall and focused on the information on the two blackboards.

She didn't respond to the previous note, much less consider bargaining. Even if the seller was willing to discount it by a thousand pounds, she wouldn't have the money or liquidity to buy it, and more importantly, she felt that Mr. World couldn't afford it either.

She stayed until the end of the gathering, and because of Mr. A's changes, she didn't linger or talk to anyone. She quickly left the house.

After more than ten minutes, the gathering came to a complete end, leaving Mr. A and his attendants alone.

Slowly, Mr. A got up and walked down the stairs to the basement.

Suddenly, his knees buckled, and he fell to the ground, rolling down several steps.

He was sprawled on the ground, and the shadow beneath him quickly turned scarlet red.

His flesh and blood melted and mixed into the shadow, making it look like a brand-new, skinless, monster-like person that had been separated from his body!

Gasp! Gasp… Mr. A's breathing gradually returned to normal as his taut body gradually relaxed.

The blood and flesh, that had separated, flowed back once again.

Everything returned back to normal.

Mr. A crawled forward and knelt in the basement, once again confessing his sins while choking with sobs.

He was confessing for his oversight from before, that he wasn't vigilant enough and caused the Lord's descent to fail.

…

City of Silver, Derrick Berg's house.

He walked in silence a few times around the table, unable to make up his mind. His reasoning told him that Mr. Hanged Man's suggestion was the best one, but the faces of the other members participating in the mission kept flashing in his mind, and he felt that he had abandoned and betrayed them by pretending to lose control!

Is there no way to save them? Should I find a chance to meet with the Chief and tell him that the half-destroyed temple belongs to the Fallen Creator, who's an evil god that controls the Shepherd pathway? That he should be careful of Elder Lovia and change the person responsible for the mission… But how should I explain where I got this information from? In their eyes, Mr. Fool would be the same as an evil god… Derrick pulled his hair in frustration.

The Axe of Hurricane was placed in a position that was within reach of his hands. Every time a bolt of lightning streaked past the window, it emitted a faint light.

Suddenly, Derrick stopped and looked out into the darkness and into the dark sky.

It was as if he had once again seen the state his parents were in before their deaths. He found the pain he had experienced when he stabbed his sword downwards.

There's no time… I need to make preparations for the future so that I wouldn't be suspected for my discovery of that god being the Fallen Creator… As his expression distorted, he clenched his teeth and muttered to himself. He then suddenly left the side of the window and went back to the table. He began practicing the Light Suppliant's Beyonder powers to drain his spirituality as quickly as possible.

…

In the Hall family's luxurious villa.

In an art studio, Audrey leisurely smeared oil paint when she heard a rhythmic knock on the door.

When her maidservant, Annie, opened the door, she saw that it was her mother, Countess Caitlyn.

Although this lady was close to fifty years old, she looked to be in her early thirties. She had blonde hair, green eyes, and a beautiful and graceful appearance, enough to attract the attention of most gentlemen.

"Mother, is something the matter?" Audrey put down the items in her hand and stood up, puzzled.

The Countess looked at her daughter, who was even more beautiful than her younger self. She smiled and said, "I just attended a dinner party. Lady Della said that you're very interested in psychology and that you wanted to hire a tutor, didn't you?"

"Yes, but I haven't decided yet…" Audrey replied hesitantly on purpose, just like she usually did.

How could the Countess not see through her daughter's thoughts? She smiled and said, "She recommended a psychiatrist named Escalante. If you have no problem with that, I'll send someone to invite her to tutor you twice a week. How about that?"

"It's your decision." Audrey's smile blossomed, bit by bit. "Mother, come and sit here. I'm lacking a beautiful model!"

…

On Tuesday morning, Klein confirmed through the Backlund Morning Post that Eye of Wisdom's gathering would be held tomorrow night.

He was relieved as he was no longer worried that his acquisition of the items he needed wouldn't be in time for Miss Sharron's attack on the enemy.

To celebrate the good news, he decided to take a day off at the Quelaag Club.

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CHAPTER 344
SPENDING LAVISHLY

Underground shooting range of the Quelaag Club.

When he was done shooting, Klein meticulously serviced his free revolver and adjusted the ratio of purifying bullets, demon hunting bullets, and exorcism bullets to 3:1:1.

Phew. He exhaled, put away the revolver, tidied his coat, and slowly walked back to the hall on the first floor.

He had already heard from the attendant that the dish that was in limited supply today was pan-fried Dragon-Bone Fish.

As soon as he entered the buffet cafeteria, Klein saw an acquaintance, Talim Dumont, the equestrian teacher from an abject noble family with short brown curls. He was eating his lunch with unfocused eyes.

Klein carried his plate over, sat down, and greeted him.

Talim turned his head and glanced at him. His lips quivered a few times, and after three or four seconds of silence, he finally opened his mouth and mumbled, "Sherlock, do you know—do you know rare people who have strange abilities and are very powerful?"

Yes, the one in front of you is one… Klein's eyebrows twitched. He didn't give a direct answer.

"What do you want to do?"

Talim opened his mouth but said nothing.

With a solemn expression, he thought for a while before he squeezed out a smile and said, "It's nothing. I was just asking out of curiosity."

He had asked what should a person do if he fell in love with someone he shouldn't have the last time, and this time, he's asking if I know of anyone with strange abilities… Is he trying to get rid of the other party and completely sever his friend's fantasies? Who's worth the risk? Hiring a killer is equivalent to murder! Klein mumbled silently, cut a piece of the fish without any fine bones, and stuffed it into his mouth.

Talim drew a breath, finished the food from his plate quickly, and wiped his mouth with a napkin.

He seemed to return to normal as he said with a smile, "Mike wants to hire you for a few days to be his bodyguard."

Mike Joseph? The reporter from the Daily Observer? I remember his performance at the Golden Rose was rather brilliant… Klein chuckled.

"What does Mike want to do now?"

Talim spread out his hands and said, "I'm not sure. He just casually mentioned this matter. It seems to have something to do with an interview. He said that he will visit you the day after tomorrow. I hope you have the time to accept this commission."

"I can't be sure." Klein, who didn't know the details, didn't give an affirmative answer.

At that moment, he heard a series of illusory pleas from a woman.

Miss Magician? Is she prepared to sacrifice the money in exchange for the formula? Klein picked up his speed and finished the rest of his food. Then,

he downed the black tea and went to the reception desk to get the attendant to open a lounge for him.

After sealing the room with a wall of spirituality, he went above the gray fog and found that his judgment was correct. Miss Magician was requesting to hold the sacrificial ritual.

The reason for her delay was that she only had 370 pounds on her, and she had to go to the bank to withdraw some of her savings.

After a series of maneuvering, she saw the 450 pounds vanish into the illusionary door, and an additional formula appeared in her mind:

"Sequence 8. Trickmaster.

"Main ingredients: Stomach pouch of a Spirit Eater, 20 ml of a Deep Sea Marlin's blood.

"Supplementary ingredients: 5 ml of essential oils made from Hornbeam, 10 grams of String Grass Powder, a blossoming Red Chestnut Flower, 80 ml of pure water."

Finally, I've finally obtained it! It's been years! Fors couldn't help pacing back and forth, feeling overjoyed and proud.

Then, not feeling at ease, she took out a pen and a piece of paper, recording down the formula so that she wouldn't forget it and end up having to trouble Mr. Fool.

If I don't meet someone who doesn't know the market well, then the main ingredient is at least 300 pounds, and I only have 430 pounds left… I still need to work hard to earn more money… I-I'm going to write a new book! Fors suddenly felt that she was brimming with motivation. She was no longer the procrastinator she had been before.

…

Five minutes to eight on a Wednesday evening, carrying all his savings, Klein entered the house where the gathering organized by Eye of Wisdom was held.

He was wearing a black robe, with the hood over his face, and an iron mask.

1,674 pounds in cash and 5 gold coins. This is the new peak of my wealth. I wonder how much will remain after this gathering… Klein entered the living room and scanned the room with the help of the candle's flickering light.

*Eh, the Apothecary didn't come. Is he caught up with something? *Klein frowned slightly and sat in the same position as he did the previous time.

After a few minutes, Eye of Wisdom clapped his hands and said, "Let's begin."

Before he could finish his sentence, someone impatiently spoke up. It was the heavily shrouded lady who seemed to have an Artisan backing her.

She suppressed her voice and asked, "Is the friend who wanted to sell the Briber formula last time here?"

"I'm here," Klein answered simply.

The lady heaved a sigh of relief, pushed her iron mask down and said, "This time, there's a Beyonder weapon that you need. Of course, you can also choose cash."

"What's the Beyonder weapon?" Klein suppressed the eagerness in his heart.

The lady organized her words and said, "This is a whip woven from the feathers of the Holy Sunbird.

"You can usually disguise it as a belt.

"When used, it will be covered with pure holy flames of light. Any undead monsters that are whipped by it will suffer great damage, and the weaker ones would even be directly obliterated.

"It can also be used to soak in liquids to create Sun Holy Water. But that would reduce the spirituality's durability. Every use will decrease its durability by a month.

"Currently, it has thirteen months of effective durability.

"If you are willing, you can exchange it for the Briber formula without paying any additional cash."

Holy Sunbird? It's not the Sun Divine Bird. If it's the latter's feathers, I'll take it! Of course, only tail feathers would do. They can be used to concoct the Sequence 4's Unshadowed potion… Klein was quite satisfied with the weapon itself, but the problem was that it could only be used for thirteen months. Every time he made Sun Holy Water, the durability would be reduced by a month. In time, he would have to replenish it with something similar.

With this in mind, he turned to look at the seat of honor.

"Mr. Eye of Wisdom, can you describe, in detail, the brooch you introduced last time?

"Oh, write it down on paper and indicate the price that would satisfy you."

He was afraid that the others would be interested in the brooch and thus raise the price, so he decided at the last second to get Eye of Wisdom to write it down.

"Alright." Eye of Wisdom laughed and asked an attendant to bring him a pen and paper.

While he was writing, the members of the gathering continued their trade. There were even some who were tempted as they asked about the price of the whip, only to receive an answer to wait.

After a while, the Eye of Wisdom finished writing the introduction and passed it to Klein through the attendant.

When Klein unrolled it, he saw that the words on the paper were written in print, preventing him from noticing anything special about them.

Very careful… He started to read carefully:

"Sun Brooch. It can also be called Midsummer, and it is considered a relatively weaker Grade 2 Sealed Artifact.

"With it acting as the center, it will fill a ten-meter radius with pure and warm energy. Normal people will not be able to sense it, but undead spirits and monsters will suffer constant damage, and they will quickly 'evaporate' like a pool of water under a blazing fireball. Even wraiths and shadows will suffer the same fate, albeit lasting a little longer.

"In such an environment, the strength of powerful undead creatures will be significantly weakened.

"It will be very difficult for the wearer to be possessed or corrupted by evil spirits or monsters. Allows use of spells such as Holy Light Summoning, Holy Water Creation, Fire of Light, Cleave of Purification, Horror Immunity, Holy Oath, and Sun Halo.

"The downside is that, as long as you carry it, you will never be able to feel cool. You will always be experiencing a terrible heat. Young man, don't underestimate this state. The hot and irritated you will slowly step into the abyss of losing control.

"I will only sell it for 2,000 pounds.

"Don't try to bargain. As you know, I'm not too short of money, and I'm a collector."

It's much stronger than I imagined. Eye of Wisdom had been very vague the last time… Klein's heart skipped a beat. After a few seconds of thought, he looked over at the woman with the Artisan backing her.

"900 pounds in cash."

The average price for a Sequence 7 potion formula was around 800 pounds.

"Deal!" the lady answered without hesitation.

…If I had known, I would have offered 1,000 pounds… Klein forced a smile.

He was a man of his word, and, without reneging his offer, he exchanged his prepared formula for 900 pounds in cash. In an instant, his wealth soared to 2,574 pounds. It was enough to make a bachelor man live a pretty good life for the rest of his life.

After Eye of Wisdom's appraisal, the lady looked at the formula once more in satisfaction.

"Sequence 7: Briber.

"Main ingredients: One Weeping Infant Flower, Strange-faced Cannabis Crystal.

"Supplementary ingredients: 5 drops of golden Jimsonweed juice, 5 drops of black Jimsonweed juice, 4 drops of Fantasy Grass essential oil, 80 ml of red wine."

After completing the transaction, Klein drew a deep breath, looked at Eye of Wisdom, and solemnly said, "2,000 pounds. I want that Sun Brooch."

Eye of Wisdom chuckled and said, "To be honest, I really don't wish to sell it, but since I have 2-081, Sun Brooch isn't necessary to me. Besides, I have already named my price, and reneging isn't my style.

"Wait three minutes for me. I'll get the Sun Brooch."

"Alright," Klein replied, feeling both expectant and also feeling the pinch.

At this point, the Beyonders in the activity room cast their gazes on him. A deal of 2,000 pounds rarely appeared at this level of ordinary gatherings, perhaps not even once in a year or two.

Klein could feel the greed and covetous feelings in their eyes.

After a short silence, the transactions continued until Eye of Wisdom returned. In his open palm lay a dark golden brooch shaped like a sunbird.

It was obvious that the Eye of Wisdom had some sweat on his face.

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CHAPTER 345
SUN BROOCH

"You can confirm it before you pay." The hooded Eye of Wisdom walked directly to Klein and handed the dark golden brooch to him.

Very generous… Klein reached out to take it, but before he could examine it closely, he felt his surroundings become very hot, even the wind felt as if it had been ignited. Once it entered his nose, it would spread to his lungs.

At this moment, he seemed to have left the cold and humid Backlund, finding himself in the desert and wilderness, right in the middle of the Northern Continent. Hanging above him was the sun that radiated endless light and heat, and in his surroundings was the extremely dry and boundless yellow sand.

Phew, it makes me want to eat ice cream… Sweat slowly seeped out of Klein's forehead, but under the iron mask, the liquid couldn't fall freely. It could only stick on the spot.

Through direct contact, he could feel the pure and warm power radiating out, but the Beyonders around him were not affected in the slightest.

After fixing the brooch in place, Klein released his spirituality and infused it into the dark golden surface.

With a boom, he saw the sky filled with dancing dots of pure gold light as he received a great deal of information.

This included how to use some of the spells in the Sun domain with the help of the brooch.

Most important of all were the tricks to injecting spirituality and the corresponding activation incantations!

One of them included providing the brooch with two seconds of spirituality, allowing it to summon a holy beam of light that descended from the sky to purify the undead and inflict certain damage on other targets.

A continuous supply of spirituality for five seconds, together with the use of the word "Sun" in ancient Hermes, would create a small amount of Sun Holy Water, which would exorcise evil spirits, drive away the cold, and purify wraiths.

In addition to the difference between strength and time intervals, the other corresponding spells could be cast as well.

Fire of Light was a sacred, concentrated flame that suddenly appeared out of thin air via a mere thought. Cleave of Purification was an effective attack against wraiths, and it could also be used to augment bullets. Horror Immunity allowed the wearer to no longer feel fear. Holy Oath was used to temporarily strengthen one's strength, agility, fire damage, and holy damage via chanting the corresponding ancient Hermes term. Sun Halo targeted comrades who were within twenty meters of him. It could effectively boost their courage and purify the evil energies within their bodies.

Not bad. Other than not being strange enough, it doesn't have too many flaws. It complements my Magician abilities nicely… It's just a little hot… Klein's mind was filled with fantasies about himself in short-sleeved clothes.

He rolled up his robe, took out a stack of bills from his inside pocket. Together with the 900 pounds he had just received from the lady with the Artisan backing her, he counted 2,000 pounds in cash before handing it to Eye of Wisdom's attendant.

After counting thrice and finally confirming that there was no mistake, Klein looked at his rapidly shrinking wallet, feeling both happy and sad at

the same time.

The money he had painstakingly saved had been reduced to 574 pounds and five gold coins.

However, he also obtained his second mystical item. The number of side effects was obviously fewer than the Master Key. It was a mystical item which was more outstanding, the Sun Brooch!

The only drawback is it's just too hot… Klein reached out and touched his iron mask, and he nearly took it off to start using it to fan himself.

With the reduction of his funds, Klein stopped considering the notion of purchasing anything else. He just sat there quietly, listening until the end of the gathering.

Stimulated by the massive deal of 2,000 pounds, the gathering that night was relatively lively. For example, the whip woven from the feathers of the Holy Sunbird was sold for 850 pounds. Eye of Wisdom also made several purchases, buying an ancient book and a Beyonder ingredient.

When the gathering ended, Eye of Wisdom surveyed the room and looked at Klein. He said with a chuckle, "You shall be the first to leave."

Is he afraid that someone will rob me… Klein thanked him sincerely and walked out of the living room under the guidance of the attendant. He then impatiently took off his hooded robe and iron mask.

He had already tried to use his spirituality to wrap and seal the Sun Brooch. It prevented it from constantly purifying the surroundings and prevented its existence from being discovered by other Beyonders. However, the negative effects couldn't be weakened, unless it was not on his person.

In order to ensure my mental health, I should only use it only when necessary. I can usually rely on purifying bullets and exorcism bullets…

Klein left the gathering venue and took a long detour before arriving outside the Bravehearts Bar.

He entered, circled the area, and quickly came out again and hired a carriage.

Unsurprisingly, he quickly saw a figure in a black regal dress outline itself opposite him.

Sharron's appearance had not changed at all. She asked in an ethereal voice, "Are you done with your preparations?"

"Yes, you can choose the ambush location and time. Notify me once you have confirmed the details." Klein nodded calmly.

Sharron looked at him and said, "Okay."

Seeing that she was about to disappear, Klein added, "Have Kaspars prepare a box of explosives and bury them all over the planned battlefield."

Sharron was silent for two seconds before she said, "Steve is also a demolition expert."

"No, my main purpose is not to blast anyone apart." Klein smiled. "I just want to put on some fireworks."

Sharron stared at him for a few seconds, then she nodded.

Witnessing her figure fading rapidly, Klein leaned back against the wall and opened the window, letting the bone-piercing wind in, but he still felt hot.

Back on Earth, I hated summer the most. Hmm, I like ice pops, ice cream, cold drinks, watermelons… as he mumbled, Klein reached into his pocket and held the Sun Brooch.

This is a mystical item worth 2,000 pounds!

Returning to Minsk Street, Klein walked slowly along the road lined with trees to Unit 15.

When he passed Lawyer Jurgen's house, he subconsciously looked inside and saw the gas lamp with a slightly blue glow.

There's someone home… Klein laughed as he sighed, his forehead constantly beaded with sweat.

…

Early the next day, on a Thursday morning.

Klein had just come out of the bathroom with a newspaper in hand when he heard the doorbell ring.

Who is it? Right, Talim mentioned that Reporter Mike Joseph will be coming to me today… Amid the tinkling bells, Klein came to the door and reached for the handle.

The image of the visitor naturally appeared in his mind:

He was about thirty years old, with a black tweed coat and a matching half top hat. He had sparse eyebrows, charming blue eyes, and a handsome mustache. But his skin was rather rough. He was none other than the reporter from the Daily Observer, Mike Joseph.

"Good morning, Mike. Talim told me about you," Klein opened the door and greeted him.

He hadn't hesitated to throw the Sun Brooch above the gray fog.

Mike Joseph pulled his bow tie and said, "Sorry for disturbing you so early, but I have matters to deal with later."

"I understand," Klein said politely, "Have you had breakfast? Would you like to try my toast?"

Mike suddenly smiled.

"I'm so sorry, that would be so nice of you.

"If it's possible, could I also have a cup of hot coffee. Milk would do too. I noticed that you ordered fresh milk."

“…Alright." Klein smiled in response.

He busied himself with the toast, poured the milk, took out a tin of butter, and sat down, eating without a word.

Across from him, Mike was enjoying his breakfast without restraint, oblivious to the silence.

Phew… Klein exhaled and put down his cup.

"Mike, you wanted to hire me to protect you?"

Mike set his knife and fork down slowly and took a mouthful of milk.

"Yes, about two days, Friday and Saturday, maybe even Sunday morning."

"Who wants to hurt you?" Klein asked in deliberation.

Mike chuckled and said, "No, this is just a form of proactive self-protection.

"The editor of the newspaper arranged for me to do an investigation in East Borough, the dock area, and the factory district. It's said that it's sponsored by some Church or aristocrat.

"As you know, gangs run rampant in East Borough. There are thugs everywhere, and there are people who are willing to betray their conscience

just to scrounge a meal. I need a bodyguard who is good at fighting and shooting.

"And most private detectives have certain connections in East Borough, don't they?"

I don't… I rely on metaphysics to crack cases, no—deduction! Klein thought for a moment and said, "But I might not have the time in the next few days."

I have to see when Miss Sharron will be taking action.

Mike cleared his throat and said, "I've already applied for ten pounds. This protection mission will amount to ten pounds, even if nothing happens."

Klein let out a soft chuckle.

"Mike, I'm serious.

"Tomorrow at this time, oh—come after breakfast to look for me. If I have availed myself, I will take this commission. If I'm really busy, then I will introduce you to other detectives. They're also good at fighting and shooting."

For example, Stuart or Kaslana… Two names flashed through his mind.

Mike finished the remaining toast and said, "That wouldn't be an issue."

After breakfast, Klein watched the journalist leave his home and admired the sights of the freezing rain outside through the oriel window—the passing carriages and pedestrians, the dark sky, and the colorful umbrellas.

Finally, a normal mission… It neither involves Beyonders nor does it have anything to do with finding cats and catching adulterers. It's a pity that it isn't a commission regarding a murder case or something like that. Otherwise, I would be able to experience what it feels like to be a true

detective… There is always only one truth! Klein's thoughts wandered aimlessly as he felt an inexplicable sense of carefreeness.

If not for the fact that he was still worried about the situation regarding Sharron and Maric, he planned to relax completely, visit all kinds of museums, buy a ticket to a large theater, listen to a few operas and musicals, and enjoy the delicacies of the various nations that had gathered in Backlund city.

Well, I'm a casual tourist, a lonely gourmet… Klein gave a self-deprecating laugh, turned around, and walked towards the sofa, intending to look through the newspapers he hadn't finished reading.

Suddenly, he noticed that a slip of paper had appeared on the coffee table. The handwriting was elegant and reserved: "Tonight at 10 o'clock. We'll meet at the back door of Bravehearts Bar."

Klein was stunned for a moment. He turned his head to look outside the window, sighed, and said, *Is it finally starting…*

1. A catchphrase from Detective Conan.

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CHAPTER 346
A MAGICIAN BEFORE GOING ONSTAGE

10 o'clock at night, in the alley by the back door of the Bravehearts Bar.

Like the previous time, Klein, in his black double-breasted frock coat and matching half top hat, had merely circled the bar once before he walked to the nearest street as though he were on a stroll.

Just as he walked out of the alley, a carriage stopped in front of him. Behind the glass window was Maric's pair of brown eyes which were still suppressing any signs of malicious intent.

Klein pressed the top of his half top hat and, holding the sturdy cane in his hand, calmly boarded the carriage as if he had hailed it himself.

He sat down and straightened his bow tie like a gentleman attending a banquet.

"That outfit isn't suitable for battle." Maric, who was wearing a white shirt, black vest, and tights, sized him up a few times and frowned.

It was obvious that he still had some doubts regarding Klein's strength, but he had chosen to trust Sharron.

Klein smiled casually and said, "My Beyonder powers are different from yours. Our fighting styles are different too. This type of clothing will not affect me negatively in any way; it even suits me very well. For example, it has a lot of pockets, and they can be used to store different items in

different places, so as to avoid taking the wrong things when in a hurry and losing my life through such a laughable mistake."

As he spoke, he took out the remaining three sedatives from a sewn concealed pocket—they were the special sedatives concocted by the Apothecary!

Just as he finished his sentence, a figure quickly outlined itself on a window of the carriage.

A figure wearing a long black regal dress and a small soft hat.

It was none other than the Sequence 5 Beyonder of the Mutant pathway, Wraith Sharron.

"You explain too much." Sharron looked at Klein and said in an ethereal tone, "Not natural enough."

…I just wanted to get into the act… Klein laughed dryly and replied, "Probably it's because I'm a bit nervous."

Without waiting for Sharron to speak again, he handed the three sedatives to Maric.

"Find a chance to drink it yourself.

"I'm sure that you're more experienced than I am. You won't drink it too early or too late, much less drink too little or too much."

Maric looked at the sealed and transparent glass test tube, gently shaking the liquid inside and said, "Two and a half. Any more and I will really be sedated. I wouldn't do anything for a short period of time."

"Very good," Klein praised and turned to look at Sharron. "Have you guys decided on the ambush spot?"

Sharron nodded.

"We're on the way there."

She didn't directly reveal the intended location to Klein.

Very prudent, very careful… Klein thought for a moment before asking, "Will you be hurt by purification?"

"As a zombie, yes. Same when I'm in my spirit state," Sharron explained succinctly.

In other words, when a Sequence 5 Wraith is still in their physical state, the purification effects wouldn't be effective… Klein thoughtfully asked, "What about exorcism?

"What about demon-hunting?"

As they were dealing with a Beyonder of the same pathway, Sharron didn't hide anything from him.

"Demon-hunting will deal damage to our bodies. Likewise for exorcism, to both our bodies and spiritual bodies. But it wouldn't be fatal."

Klein curled his lips into a smile and exhaled.

"I understand."

He pondered for a moment, and he asked again after some deliberation, "Do you feel the power of purification and exorcism now?"

"No," Maric replied hoarsely.

Very good, this spirituality cage, modified from a wall of spirituality, is indeed able to isolate the effects of the Sun Brooch. However, I'm so hot… Klein secretly sighed and confirmed, "Wraith Steve, Zombie Jason, and

Werewolf Tyre, do they have any other mystical items or Beyonder weapons besides the Scarlet Lunar Corona?"

"We don't know." Maric pinched his glabella, looking a bit irritated.

With the battle at hand, he couldn't help but be stirred by these emotions while suppressing his maliciousness and desires.

Sharron listened silently and replied without any hints of discomposure, "When influenced by the Scarlet Lunar Corona, Jason and Tyre will be in a rather fervent state.

"Even if they have mystical items, they would lack the reason to use them."

"Unless it's something passive," added Maric. "But to a Werewolf, their claws are their Beyonder weapons. It's the same for me, Tyre, and Jason. It can tear through steel and comes with venom."

Klein's eyes darted about as he nodded.

"Alright, I have no more questions."

In the night with few pedestrians, the carriage sped across the streets, its wheels going over puddles of water from time to time, splattering fine dirt onto itself.

After ten minutes or so, Maric had the zombie driver stop the carriage.

Klein looked out through the glass window and saw a dark, dilapidated building. Not far away, the sound of running water could be heard.

"This is the West Balam dock that has been abandoned for a year and is about to be rebuilt. Our planned ambush point will be around its warehouses," Maric introduced.

The abandoned West Balam dock… If an accident were to really happen, the Tussock River would be the best escape route… According to my previous survey, there is a Lever Cathedral about two kilometers northwest of here, one belonging to the Church of the God of Steam and Machinery… Klein quickly recalled his surroundings.

He disembarked from the carriage, tidied up his clothes in a leisurely manner, and, with his cane in hand, followed Sharron and Maric into the dock which awaited renovations.

After walking for about five minutes, they came to an open space surrounded by several warehouses.

The soil here was dark brown, with withered weeds lying everywhere. A wooden chest quietly sat in a dark corner.

"Those are the explosives you asked for." Maric pointed.

Klein immediately nodded and said, "Aren't you afraid that a tramp might steal them?"

"My zombies are sleeping underground here. If anyone enters, they will scare that person away." Maric pointed to a few other spots. "Avoid them when you bury the explosives."

"No problem." Klein smiled and nodded before asking, "Will my purification and exorcism effects hurt your guys?"

"No, they are equivalent to corpses when in deep slumber, and there's also a thick layer of soil shielding them." Maric gave an affirmative answer.

After looking around, Sharron became talkative for once.

"Stay here and make your preparations. We'll go and lure the enemy over.

"It won't take more than thirty minutes. Please make use of the time.

"After you finish your preparations, hide in a warehouse. Don't be in a hurry to make your move. Make sure to be patient.

"No matter how dangerous the situation is, treat it as normal.

"When I become weak and the Scarlet Lunar Corona appears, you can use that 'eye' to search for Steve and launch a sudden attack on him. I will also use my mystical item to complement you."

Klein listened attentively, chuckled, and said, "A very simple plan."

"The simpler the plan, the more effective it is," Sharron calmly responded.

Maric pinched his forehead, shook his head, and said, "Steve isn't a fool. If any problem arises in a complicated plan, it will lead to a complete disaster.

After they finished their exchange, Sharron vanished and Maric quickly departed from the dock.

After watching them leave, Klein took out a small square metal box from his pocket. Its surface was covered in a thin film of spirituality. This was the spirituality cage that had been modified from a wall of spirituality.

It could, to some extent, isolate the outside world from the effects of certain mystical items, but it couldn't abate the negative effects they had on the possessor.

Of course, Sealed Artifacts which were too powerful or too strange were definitely not something that a spirituality cage could deal with. They required a special sealing environment that was specially designed for it.

Four warehouses, overgrown with weeds. The ground is muddy from the rain earlier… Klein took out a piece of paper and shook it.

Pa!

The paper quickly became taut and as hard as an iron plate.

Klein held the note and dug a shallow hole in the middle of the open ground. He buried the small square iron box in his hand. There was only a thin layer of soil between it and the outside world.

Next, he took out the explosives from the wooden box and buried them in different corners and in different warehouses.

He buried the remaining explosive sticks near the center.

After finishing all of this, he took out his revolver and adjusted the ratio of the bullets again—3 purifying bullets and 2 exorcism bullets.

Putting away the revolver in his underarm holster, Klein tidied his clothes, walked to a gap between two warehouses, and threw a paper figurine there, right above some buried explosives.

He examined his surroundings again, and then he took out another square metal box. He removed the spirituality cage on its surface and took out the dark golden sunbird shaped brooch, solemnly wearing it on his left chest.

Phew… Klein let out a breath, left the place, circled the exterior, threw out some inconspicuous items, and burned away the used piece of paper.

When he returned, he climbed to the top of one of the warehouses and hid in the shadows.

Reaching out his hand, he counted and confirmed the various charms, extract, and herbal powders. He touched the iron cigarette case and snapped his fingers.

The paper figurine he had left between the two warehouses stood up and transformed into a gentleman wearing a black double-breasted frock coat, a silk half top hat, and was holding a hard cane.

The gentleman's position was rather remote and hidden, making it difficult for anyone who came in from the outside to notice him.

With his stand-in present, Klein's figure disappeared from where he stood.

However, his vision wasn't affected in any way, and he could clearly see the road that led to the clearing.

Even though he had made preparations and had experienced many battles, Klein was still a bit afraid and nervous at that very moment.

No matter how good a performance was, it could still be seen through!

Furthermore, the enemy was a Sequence 5 wielding a mystical item! There was also a Sequence 6 and Sequence 7!

Is this the state every magician is in before he goes onstage? Klein took a silent breath, suppressing his emotions and the heat of his body.

That night, the crimson moon was constantly obscured by the clouds, and there was only a glimmer of light in the clearing.

Before long, Klein saw three figures rapidly approaching.

One in front, one in the middle, and one at the back!

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CHAPTER 347
ZOMBIE AND WEREWOLF

Running ahead of the group was Maric. His disheveled hair was completely blown back by the wind, and his expression was twisted and hideous.

He was even faster than a steam locomotive at its peak speed. With a whoosh, he arrived at the entrance to the clearing.

But even so, he was still unable to escape from his pursuers.

The closest figure to him was a man who had the same pale complexion as himself, with indistinct, dark patches on his face, as if they were healing marks from rotting wounds. The malice in his eyes was completely undisguised and unrestrained. He looked more like a zombie who was craving fresh flesh rather than a human being, and Klein guessed that he was Jason, a Sequence 6.

The distance between Jason and Maric remained within seven or eight meters, sometimes lengthening; sometimes shortening. This repeated again and again, as they ventured back and forth.

More than ten meters behind them, a figure was left far behind. It was a thin but muscular man; his hair was shaved very short, and his hair stood erect like spikes.

As he swung his arms, the tip of his palms flashed with a metallic light, reflecting the weak crimson moonlight. Those were black fingernails which were as long as daggers!

Werewolf Tyre… Klein chanted the person's Sequence and name silently. In his mind, the wall that was splashed with blood appeared in his mind. It was a scene with intestines and limbs splattered all over the ground.

Tap! Tap! Tap!

Maric used all his strength as he ran while Jason gritted his teeth and ran as fast as he could. At some point, the healed dark spots on his face began to swell, as if some sort of rotten liquid was about to ooze out.

The two of them left the puddles of water and moist soil that were turning into white frost in their wake.

The withered weeds were lifted up by the wind created by the two of them. As they slowly fell down, they began to rot and decay at a speed visible to the naked eye.

Suddenly, a pale hand reached out of the frosted soil and accurately grabbed Jason's ankle.

Pa!

Jason twisted his body and forcefully kicked out, breaking the hand's wrist and sending it flying. The remaining stump's flesh and blood had long since rotten, and white maggots struggled to squirm outwards.

Maric stopped, pinched his lips with his right hand, and let out a shrill whistle.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

The soil in different parts of the clearing were lifted, and the expressionless corpses sat up.

At the same time, a chilly wind suddenly swirled. Countless transparent shadows seemed to have caught the scent of a bloody feast, and none of

them wanted to fall behind as they rushed towards Jason. Some pulled his arms, some pulled his calves, and some even hugged his head.

Jason stopped and grunted.

The shadows flew out, one after another—some of them screamed miserably and disappeared, while others stayed in their original spots, lost.

At almost the same time, Maric and Jason both raised their right hands, thumbs held up beside their forefingers, with their index fingers aiming at each other.

Silently, the air between them exploded as black wisps of air billowed upwards.

Maric took a step back, and a few strands of his disheveled hair withered in a blink of an eye and fluttered to the ground.

"Maric, you're still so weak. You still don't understand how to use the power of desire!" Jason said with a low, hoarse laugh.

At this moment, Werewolf Tyre had already arrived at his side. As for Steve, the Sequence 5 Beyonder in charge of the operation, was nowhere to be found.

"Don't be in such a hurry to finish off Maric. Wait for Sharron to come and save him, Lord Steve is about to arrive," Werewolf Tyre whispered to Jason.

He then extended his bright red tongue and licked his lips.

"I wonder what Sharron will look like when she has her clothes off…”

Before he could finish his sentence, he suddenly saw Jason turn his head. His face was deathly pale, and there were two identical figures in his eyes.

Black regal dress, light blonde hair, exquisite face, and pale skin!

Pa!

He struck out with both palms and gripped Werewolf Tyre's neck. The creaking sound of bones giving way sounded out.

Wraith Sharron had attacked!

Tyre inhaled sharply, making his neck bulge like a water pipe. It grew strands of stiff black hair and briefly resisted the force that would snap his windpipe and neck.

His eyes gradually rolled backward, showing its whites as his red tongue hung out and sticky saliva drooled down his lips.

However, his right hand had accurately reached into his pocket. He had cracked a preset spirituality seal!

The empty clearing, together with the warehouses, suddenly lit up as crimson moonlight filled the entire area.

Jason's grip on Werewolf Tyre's neck began to weaken, and a figure in a small, soft hat appeared behind him.

Tyre's face broke into a smile that was both smug and cruel. His right hand took out a miniature "full moon" from his pocket, a crimson "full moon!"

It was a dark red accessory that constantly emitted a serene luster. Shaped like a full moon, it had crimson rubies embedded along its circumference. In the middle was a symbol that symbolized the moon, as well as many other mysterious labels.

Sharron narrowed her eyes instinctively and retreated two steps back. Her incorporeality slowly receded.

Her legs no longer seemed capable of supporting her weight. She fell limply to the ground, her black and complicated regal dress stained with dust and

mud.

Werewolf Tyre raised the palm-sized round accessory high up into the air, laughing as he gasped for breath.

"Lord Steve was right. You would definitely attempt to counterattack. And Sharron, your target for possession would definitely be Jason, whose Sequence is higher than mine. Therefore, the Scarlet Lunar Corona was given to me.

"Guess, where is he now?"

This… This isn't as Sharron had expected… It seems like I can only choose the best opportunity to strike myself… Klein frowned as he heard this, and he forcefully suppressed the anxiety in his heart.

At this point, Werewolf Tyre was in no hurry to attack. He knew that the longer the effects of the Scarlet Lunar Corona lasted, the weaker Sharron would become, and the more Maric would be in pain.

In Jason's cold eyes, which usually had a hint of savagery and madness, there was no longer any rationality in them left.

He was also affected by the Scarlet Lunar Corona, but he was used to indulging in his desires, so he didn't feel any pain. Instead, he felt a thirst for the fresh flesh before his eyes.

Gasp!

Jason let out a low, inhuman growl from his throat. His exposed skin and hair turned white.

At that moment, Sharron raised her arms with difficulty and used her left hand to remove the black glove that she wore on her right palm. Jason happened to lunge at her, and a thin layer of ice covered the soil around her!

Suddenly, endless rays of light burst forth from Sharron's palm.

As they fed on Sharron's spirituality, they interweaved in front of the doll-like lady to form a bronze door, which was covered with mysterious patterns and filled with an indescribable smell.

The door swung open with a creak and a crack appeared!

From the crack, pairs of pale or transparent hands or arms covered in teeth or bloody, skinless arms, stretched out, crossed the void, and grabbed Zombie Jason!

Indescribable pairs of eyes were hidden in the darkness behind the door, quietly watching the prey in front of them.

Before he could even react, Jason was grabbed by the arms, and he was entangled by smooth and incorporeal tentacles! These tentacles were dark-green vines that had countless baby faces protruding out!

These strange entities were crying and laughing as they tried to drag Zombie Jason behind the door.

Even though his thoughts were completely controlled by his bloodlust and the urge to kill, Jason instinctively felt afraid.

Gasp!

The sound from his throat suddenly intensified, and layers of frost immediately appeared on the worrisome-looking arm. The dark-green vines that protruded from the babies' faces emitted painful groans as they continuously dripped with decayed, turbid yellow liquid.

The pulling force abated, but it did not disappear.

Jason kept directing ghosts to interfere, but it was like throwing a stone into the sea. Even when he tried to use spells from Death's domain, they failed

to deliver any striking results.

His body began moving uncontrollably towards the crack of the illusory mysterious door. Occasionally, he would manage to struggle and retreat a little.

As he had taken a sedative in advance, Maric was not completely taken down by the pain. Taking advantage of this, he took out the last two sedatives, broke the bottle with a snap, and drank one and a half glasses in one go.

The suppressed malice in his eyes weakened, and his twisted expression returned to normal. He swept his gaze at Werewolf Tyre.

At the same time, with a swoosh, Tyre's thin but muscular body disappeared and reappeared more than ten meters away.

As his figure began outlining itself, an illusory image was left behind. A black aura that seemed to be alive rose up from the ground, pierced through the remnant images, and disappeared with a flicker.

Tyre hadn't used Blink, as his Sequence didn't have the corresponding Beyonder powers to do so.

He had relied on the Scarlet Lunar Corona to push him to his maximum speed!

The speed at which he moved at produced afterimages!

At that moment, Klein, who was hiding in the shadows at the top of the warehouse, also reached into his pocket with his left hand, touching the iron cigarette case. He removed its surface spirituality cage and gently opened the case.

He was sure that Wraith Steve had already arrived at the scene; otherwise, Jason definitely would've been dragged behind the terrible door if the

deadlock continued. As for Wraith Tyre, despite being augmented by the Scarlet Lunar Corona, he was unable to instantly finish Maric off. When Sharron aimed the Door of Mysteries at the Werewolf, the Scarlet Lunar Corona would end up changing owners.

As soon as Klein's fingers touched the All-Black Eye inside the metal cigarette case, his mind filled with crazy, foul, and terrifying ravings!

There were terrifying ravings that made his blood vessels bulge. He felt as though his eyes were cracking, and his head could explode at any moment.

And in the midst of these ravings, Klein saw strange, mysterious, and illusory black threads. They were divided into groups, some of them extending to Sharron's body, some of them from Werewolf Tyre. They intertwined with each other without entangling themselves as they extended into the void.

Among them, many of the black lines came from a spot not far away from Maric, and they didn't overlap!

Wraith Steve! He wants to possess Maric! With a thought, Klein retracted his left hand.

Instead of drawing his gun to shoot, he snapped his fingers without making much of a sound.

Boom!

An explosion suddenly occurred between the two warehouses. The raging flames and heat caused a figure wearing a black double-breasted frock coat to float out.

After catching the attention of the others, Klein quickly drew his gun and pulled the trigger at the spot he remembered.

At the same time, the dark golden Sunbird brooch on his chest flashed with a ray of light.

He added Cleave of Purification to the purifying bullet!

Bang!

The bullet shot out with a faint golden beam of light.

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CHAPTER 348
TERRIFYING WRAITH

A faint golden stream of light flashed past, hitting what seemed like an empty space.

However, resplendent flames suddenly rose up from that spot, rapidly forming a silhouette who was wearing a black tuxedo and a dark red cloak.

The figure's left arm was burning with holy and pure flames as it continuously emitted faint black and green smoke, illuminating his pale face in dark green glow.

It was a man in his forties with oily hair that was neatly combed with meticulous attention. His eyes were dark and green, and while possessing no emotion, there were no signs of pain!

Wraith Steve!

He turned his head and looked maliciously at Klein, who was at the top of the warehouse.

Klein was startled as he felt his body suddenly turn cold. Even the heat brought by the Sun Brooch couldn't counteract it.

His body stiffened quickly, and his eyes glazed over. His pupils reflected the same two figures: a black tuxedo, a dark red cloak, a head of hair slathered with oil, a pair of dark green eyes, and the pale face of a man in his forties!

Almost in an instant, Klein was placed under Steve's control, his thoughts gradually numbing.

This was the ability of a Sequence 5 Wraith!

It was a strange and hardly defensible ability!

Fortunately, he was adequately aware of everything beforehand and was already prepared for it. Moreover, the exorcism effect could effectively resist the possession of evil spiritual beings, so before his ability to think had completely disappeared, he stimulated the spirituality of his Spirit Body and injected it into the dark golden Sunbird brooch.

Just as he was about to raise his hand to grab hold of his neck, a warm and pure ray of light suddenly descended from the sky.

It was like a pillar of light from the Sun, bringing with it a feeling of brilliance and holy purification as it enveloped Klein within.

It was a spell from the Sun domain, Holy Light Summoning!

Amidst the holy light, the formless possession ability was weakened, and Klein's eyes suddenly regained their luster.

In close succession, his body ignited, becoming brittle and charred, leaving behind a thin piece of paper.

At the same time, between the gaps of the two warehouses, Klein, in his double-breasted frock coat and matching silk half top hat, jumped out of the roaring flames from the previous explosion.

His cane had been thrown away somewhere long ago, and the same figure floating above his head had also been successfully destroyed by the flames. It turned into pieces of ashes and scattered in every direction.

Before Klein could confirm his situation, he felt an invisible grip on his ankle.

There was a firm grip on his calves, arms, chest, and clothes!

In his Spirit Vision which had long been activated, Klein saw blurry, transparent figures. Some of them were incomplete, some were covered in blood, some of them had burnt black skin, and others were pale and cold.

Phew… A cold wind of unknown origins blew at his neck, making his hair stand on end and made his body tremble uncontrollably.

The dark golden Sunbird brooch in front of him suddenly flashed with a brilliant light, and golden illusory flames started flaring up around him one after another!

These flames emitted the aura of the sun, and because they were so dense, they formed a sea.

This was the "Fire of Light" from the Sun domain!

The ghastly ghosts around Klein shrieked silently and vanished, and the cold wind at the back of his head was replaced by the scorching heat of the Sun Brooch.

Klein, who was temporarily safe in this environment, couldn't help but sigh in fear.

Even though he had prepared ahead of time and had obtained items to counter his opponent, a one on one battle with a Sequence 5 Wraith was still precarious. The "performance" had almost ended in failure from the very beginning!

Not too far away from Maric, the dark red-cloaked Steve's figure turned slightly incorporeal. The bright flames on his left arm were quickly extinguished under the onslaught of the black aura.

His eyes shone with dark green light, filled with malice and desire. He seemed to have lost his mind and ability to think.

At this moment, with the shot's warning, Maric had distanced himself and directed the numb-faced zombies who had crawled out of the earth to surround Werewolf Tyre. He created slippery layers of ice and rotting sludge in an attempt to affect his enemy's movements.

Werewolf Tyre held onto the tiny full moon that was emitting crimson light as he ran without stopping. When he was blocked by a zombie, he casually swiped down.

Whoosh!

The zombie was immediately split into six pieces. The long rotten flesh and wriggling maggots sprinkled all over the ground.

Werewolf Tyre froze for a moment, looking at his claws in disbelief.

Only then did he understand that the augmentation that the Scarlet Lunar Corona brought him wasn't only restricted to speed.

He felt that he had mastered some powerful and strange spell!

Tyre stopped running and turned to face the pale Maric.

At this moment, Zombie Jason was drawing closer to the illusory but mysterious door. His body was covered with dark-green vines that had protruded from the faces of the babies. He was being dragged by arms that were either full of teeth or were skinless.

His eyes were almost touching the crack of the bronze door as he stared coldly at the indescribable eyes hidden in the darkness.

It was as if that place was the final resting place for his heart.

"No!"

His body, which was controlled by bloodlust and the desire to kill, shouted out shrilly.

Werewolf Tyre, who was about to counterattack, stopped instantaneously. Clenching his teeth, he threw the miniature version of the crimson full moon at Steve.

Only by allowing a Sequence 5 Beyonder to regain his strength would he be augmented, allowing the battle to come to a quick end. Only then would Jason have a chance of being rescued!

Upon seeing this, Klein's eyes lit up, and he immediately snapped his fingers.

Pa!

Boom!

In the Scarlet Lunar Corona's trajectory, a pre-buried explosive threw up the soil, blew out a strong impactful gust of wind, and set off a scarlet flame.

Being struck by this, the Scarlet Lunar Corona was redirected and landed in another direction.

Boom!

Another explosive blew up, inducing a fiery light to rise up. Klein leaped up and pounced at the Scarlet Lunar Corona which wasn't too far from him.

Suddenly, a pale palm appeared right in front of the Scarlet Lunar Corona's landing spot and grabbed it.

It was none other than Steve, who had disappeared and then reappeared!

His instincts made him chase after the full moon!

Pa! With a soft sound, Steve grabbed the Scarlet Lunar Corona. His dark green eyes, which were full of malice and desire, gained a trace of spiritual luster. This caused him to return from the form of a pure wraith to a Sequence 5 powerhouse.

He smirked at Klein.

He wasn't in a hurry to deal with this weak opponent, so he let his figure disappear once more.

Klein, who had already thrown himself out, rolled twice, reached into his pocket with his left hand, and once again gently flipped open the iron cigarette case. He touched Rosago's All-Black Eye.

Amidst the ravings that caused his tears and snot to constantly flow, Klein saw more strange black lines, and from their origin, he caught a glimpse of the invisible Steve.

He was closing in on Sharron, who was slumped to the ground weakly, at high speeds. He wanted to control her, rescue Jason, and put an end to the battle.

Sharron was their main target for this operation!

Klein suddenly retracted his left hand, and with a thought, he once again injected his spirituality into the Sun Brooch.

2! 1!

A holy beam of light descended from the sky, enveloping Sharron from behind.

Steve, who was wearing a dark red cloak, suddenly appeared a few meters away, barely avoiding the holy light.

With the augmentation of the Scarlet Lunar Corona, his speed was already frightening to the point of him being capable of effectively dodging in an instant!

But at the same time, the genuflecting Klein had raised his right hand and pulled the trigger of the revolver.

His target was Jason!

A resplendent bullet flew out, aimed directly at Jason's back, and was about to "help" him enter the bronze door of mystery.

But at that moment, Steve disappeared and reappeared behind Jason, blocking the bullet with his open left palm.

Sizzle!

The sunlight from the explosion made him shake his arm in pain. He narrowed his eyes as his skin was constantly charring and peeling, but it quickly healed.

Suddenly, he heard a crisp sound!

Klein had snapped his fingers again!

Boom!

A nearby explosive exploded. The resulting shock wave and bullet-like stones shot out in all directions.

A large number of them landed on Jason's and Steve's bodies!

"No!"

With a blood-curdling scream, the clothes on Jason's side tore apart, and the quickly-darkening white spots on his skin appeared as if fresh blood was

about to seep out.

To a Zombie with a body as hard as steel, this wasn't an effective injury, but to a person like Jason who was struggling to hold on, it was equivalent to the beckoning of death.

He could no longer hold on as those terrifying arms quickly pulled him into the crack of the bronze door!

"No…”

Jason's scream resounded into the distance as the mysterious and illusory door closed with a clang, devouring the rest of his screams and isolating it from the world!

The clearing in the middle of the warehouses turned completely silent. Jason had completely disappeared, as though he had never been born into this world.

Steve's eyes widened, and he opened his mouth, letting out an angry screech, "Damn it!"

Bam!

As his voice resounded, Klein felt as if someone had heavily hammered him in the head. His vision turned blurry, and whatever he breathed in smelled of blood. His vision had become blood-red.

For a short time, his ears were filled with buzzing sounds, and he couldn't hear anything else.

After Tyre delivered the Scarlet Lunar Corona, he had grown black fur and sharp fangs. He was no longer immune to its effects and painfully covered his ears. Blood even flowed out from the corner of his eyes and mouth.

Maric, who should have seized the opportunity to grab him, was in an even worse state. His desire and malice, which had been suppressed by the sedative, had reared their heads once more, causing him to almost lose control of his zombies. His expression was extremely twisted.

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CHAPTER 349
POISON BOTTLE

Due to Wraith Steve's shriek, the weakened Miss Sharron also revealed a painful expression. However, she still managed to close her palm with much difficulty, causing the rays of light to be severed, which caused the illusory, mysterious bronze door to disappear.

Klein knew that the situation was turning bad. Enduring his headache, he quickly took a step back and entered the fire. His figure quickly disappeared and reappeared in another explosion that happened in a different direction.

He had just jumped out, in an attempt to strike back, when he saw Steve, the middle-aged man with the dark red cloak, stop in his tracks instead of chasing after him, as though he was waiting for something.

Klein suddenly felt agitated. His head felt dizzy, and his stomach spasmed.

He quickly weakened, but he had no idea why.

Maric, who had just recovered from the sharp shriek, also had an abnormal reaction. He constantly stretched out his hands to grab at himself, as if his body suffered an uncontrollable itch.

He gasped for breath as he used his long, sharp nails to rip apart his clothes and left white streaks across his body. The more he scratched, the deeper it became, causing its redness to seep out.

Sharron fell to the ground, but she couldn't stand again. Her blue eyes lost their focus, as though she couldn't see anything.

"Poison…” she whispered the word.

Not far from her, Steve looked at her tightly clenched fist. He seemed rather fearful of the bronze door that was covered with mysterious patterns and an indescribable smell. He didn't dare to recklessly make a move.

In his right hand, he held the Scarlet Lunar Corona, the crimson full moon that was releasing a cold glow. Using his left hand, he took out a brown, translucent glass bottle from his pocket, and he snorted.

"Biological Poison Bottle can be used to randomly create different kinds of toxins. As long as you open it, the poisons will gradually spread to its surroundings.

"It will be effective in less than a minute, and the symptoms will only become worse. In four minutes, if you don't leave the poison-filled environment, then the corresponding effects will be unpreventable, such as death.

"What a pity. I thought Jason would be able to hold on to this moment.

"Sharron, you wouldn't have been affected since a Spirit Body isn't afraid of poison, but unfortunately, there's the Scarlet Lunar Corona here, which prevents you from switching states.

"Perhaps, you can give up resisting and let me understand your hidden charms."

He appeared to be leisurely introducing the abilities of the mystical item in his hand, as though he wanted to wait for Klein and company to completely lose their ability to resist before attacking.

However, Tyre didn't understand his intention. Under the influence of the Scarlet Lunar Corona, the irrational Werewolf started his counterattack without hesitation. He threw himself forward, flailed his claws, and swiped across Maric's body, tearing it apart.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

The sound of nails tearing through steel sounded in succession, and Maric's skin finally showed signs of bloody wounds.

Klein pinched his forehead. It felt like his forehead was starting to heat up, but the negative effects weren't as bad as what Steve mentioned.

It seems like the poison has been weakened by the Sun Brooch's constant purification and purging effect.… Klein suddenly sneered.

"Are you planning on attacking us after we succumb to the poison?

"Why do you think I didn't use fireworks just now? Why do you think I relied on explosives?

"With so many explosions, I've definitely attracted the attention of others. The official Beyonders nearby are rushing here at this very moment. You don't have much time left!"

Steve turned his head to look at Klein, whose face was couldn't be identified thanks to the paint that was smeared on it. He suddenly laughed and said, "I forgot there's a bug that I can easily deal with.

"Don't worry, you'll definitely be dead before the people from the Church arrive…”

Before he could finish his sentence, Klein suddenly raised the revolver in his right hand and shot out a purifying bullet.

Steve moved his footsteps slightly, traversing several meters in turn. Along the way, he left afterimages behind.

However, Klein's bullet didn't hit where he had aimed. Instead, it hit the middle of the clearing, piercing through the soil, and creating a loud commotion!

A breeze of spirituality blew past, and both Maric's zombie and Steve's shadows stopped moving at the same time.

In a split-second, they charged out rabidly, charging towards the center of the clearing like a pack of hungry dogs at mealtime.

Steve, who was about to use arcane methods to control Klein and easily kill him, was stunned for a moment. Then, he revealed a puzzled and surprised expression.

For some baffling reason, he discovered that he couldn't command the undead he controlled! It was a first for him!

At the same time, Klein snapped his fingers, detonating a few more bombs and setting off scarlet flames that soared into the air in different locations.

His figure leaped from one bonfire to the other as he blinked towards the clearing's exterior.

"You want to run!?" Steve whispered. Just as he was about to turn incorporeal to chase after his target, he found that the zombies and shadows had dug out a square metal box and were fighting for the item inside.

Soon, one of shadow succeeded. Its body swelled, and seemingly gaining intelligence, it flew in another direction.

So that item is used to delay my actions and allow him to successfully escape… Humph, he still doesn't understand what a Wraith and the Scarlet Lunar Corona is capable of! Steve temporarily gave up on chasing Klein. Putting away the Biological Poison Bottle, his body suddenly disappeared and appeared on a thin layer of ice that formed in a puddle of water. He relied on his terrifying speed to drag out an afterimage and arrived behind that giant shadow.

Steve's eyes flashed with a dark green light. The shadow instantly dispersed without a sound, and the item in its hand dropped.

The other zombies and shadows, completely disregarding the oppressive aura of the mighty existence as they rushed over to grab it.

Steve was more and more alarmed and curious. He discovered that his spiritual intuition couldn't draw any revelations from the object that had caused the rioting of the zombies and shadows.

He stepped forward and grabbed the object with his left hand.

It was a dark gold key ring. Hanging from it was an ancient and exquisite copper whistle. Beside the copper whistle hung a simple bronze key.

They clung closely together as they remained in Steve's pale palm.

At the same time, Steve's Scarlet Lunar Corona in his right hand was quietly emanating a crimson glow, like a miniature full moon.

Before thoughts even surfaced in Steve's mind, a faint but very strange sound entered his mind, ripping at his nerves and scraping his scalp.

"Ah!"

Steve let out a miserable scream and fell from midair to the ground. The Scarlet Lunar Corona, which he held in his hand, and the key ring with the copper whistle and key were sent flying at the same time.

He struggled and twisted on the spot, his body bulging and protruding. There were arms that were as small as babies which grew out of his body, or a foul, light yellow liquid that sloshed inside his body.

At this moment, a flame ignited again. Klein, who had "escaped," leaped out and appeared in the path of the Scarlet Lunar Corona.

He didn't attempt to catch the mystical item. Instead, with a gentle flick, he diverted its trajectory, sending it flying toward the weakened Miss Sharron.

Steve's cries of pain gradually died down, and the Scarlet Lunar Corona accurately landed on Sharron.

Sharron's figure instantly turned incorporeal, and the blue eyes that had lost their focus regained their luster.

Clenching her right hand tightly, her left hand held the palm-sized accessory inlaid with a ring of dark rubies. Her body began to float.

The Scarlet Lunar Corona allowed its wielder to be immune to the influence of the full moon!

Sharron was no longer weak!

And in her Spirit Body state, she wasn't afraid of the biological poison!

At this moment, the zombies and shadows gathered together once again, fighting over the chained Master Key and Azik's copper whistle.

Klein didn't care. He raised his left arm and pointed.

The Sun Brooch on his chest flashed a dark golden glow and disappeared. An intense, bright, and holy light fell from the sky, shrouding the group of zombies and shadows that were fighting over it.

In what seemed like daylight, the transparent and bizarre shadows quickly melted and disappeared. The pale and stinking corpses emitted black smoke first before they ignited and burned like candles.

By the time the light disappeared, there was almost nothing left except for Azik's ancient and intricate copper whistle and the Master Key which were both strung on an already blackened key ring. They lay there silently.

Meanwhile, Sharron didn't care about Maric, whose injuries were turning graver thanks to Tyre's attacks. Instead, she relied on her own ability to

phase into mirror-like items to reach the thin piece of ice, that Steve had previously used, and stepped out.

She stretched out her right hand towards Steve, who was transforming into a monster, and opened it wide, aiming the palm of her hand at the enemy!

Endless rays of light burst out and quickly intertwined to form the mysterious-patterned bronze door.

Creak!

With a jarring noise, the small black hat on Sharron's head was blown away by a sudden gust of wind, and her carefully combed blonde hair cascaded down in a disheveled state.

It was obvious that using the mystical item again was rather taxing on her.

Creak!

The mysterious bronze door produced a crack, and a series of shrill laughter, sobbing, and shouting echoed in the air.

Arms either filled with teeth or completely without skin reached out wildly and grabbed at Steve, whose pustules were bursting one by one.

The strange dark-green vines that accentuated an infant's face and the slippery, illusory tentacles also bound the Sequence 5 powerhouse.

"Ah!"

Steve cried out again.

The pale yellow pus, which flowed out, covered his entire body, allowing him to barely resist the pull.

A bright red crack appeared on his face, and in it was a hole leading to a dark tunnel!

At that moment, Klein raised his revolver and aimed it at him.

Without any delay or hesitation, with his face disguised, Klein calmly pulled the trigger while wearing his half top hat.

Bang! Bang!

With a flash of the Sun Brooch, two bullets filled with holiness accurately hit Steve in the head.

Although they didn't pierce his skin or bones, they ignited resplendent flames, turning Steve into a bright torch.

"Ah!"

With another scream, Steve was pulled closer to the illusory bronze door.

As Klein released the revolver's cylinder, the shells fell to the ground, and he took out the metal box containing the Beyonder bullets.

At the same time, he once again injected his spirituality into the Sun Brooch.

2! 1!

A pure and flawless pillar of light fell from the sky and instantly hit Steve's body.

Taking this breather, Klein inserted three purifying bullets and three exorcism bullets into the cylinder and snapped it shut.

He aimed at Steve's head again, and with the flash of the dark golden brooch, he pulled the trigger hard, six times in a row.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

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CHAPTER 350
SPLENDID FIREWORKS

One by one, the bullets sliced through the air—either swirling with a golden luster or emitting resplendent beams—as they hit Steve's head.

Thanks to a Clown's control over his body and his persistence in practicing his marksmanship, Klein's six bullets which were augmented with Cleave of Purification accurately hit the same spot, the same spot as the first two bullets!

They were like fists from a giant of light, repeatedly pounding at the left of Steve's face!

With a series of bangs, Steve, who had been entangled by the strange arms and the dark-green vines, failed to phase away to avoid the attack. His head was whipped to the side repeatedly as his body trembled. His cheekbones quickly caved in, breaking out into sharp white bones!

Bang!

The last bullet completely tore through, splashing the Sequence 5 powerhouse's dark red blood. This opening allowed the resplendent and golden flames to continuously drill in, burning into bursts of dark-green mist.

In the holy light, Steve's clothes were ignited. His body was quickly charred as he dripped with grease.

However, he was still alive!

Compared to Nimblewright Master Rosago, the survivability of a Sequence 5 from the Mutant pathway was clearly much better!

However, the heavily injured Steve could no longer resist the strange tugging arms. His legs moved forward uncontrollably, almost flying towards that bronze door and into the deep crack that had opened. He was thrown into the darkness where pairs of eyes lurked.

At this moment, Sharron suddenly clenched her right hand, her forehead covered in sweat.

The illusory and subtle rays of light were abruptly severed, and the indescribably mysterious bronze door lost the source of its existence.

It swayed, and before Steve entered, it reluctantly pulled back its long arms which were either filled with teeth or blood and sealed the crack.

Creak!

The door closed, quickly becoming transparent before it disappeared!

Steve's leaning body was rigid in place, blackened, and shriveled, like a mummified corpse that had been burned for a long time.

With her right fist tightly clenched and the Scarlet Lunar Corona on her, Sharron's figure rapidly turned incorporeal. She took a step forward and overlapped with Steve.

Klein's Spirit Vision instantly lost sight of her. However, the charred Steve raised his fists and abruptly smashed them against his already severely injured head.

Bam!

His head turned into a pulp like that of a rotten tomato, and milky white spots sprayed out before splattering to the ground.

A translucent figure was also expelled. It rapidly spread out, turning into something that looked like a giant jellyfish. Within it was an dreamlike liquid that was swishing and a pair of deathly pale eyes that were condensing!

Sharron was forced out by this strange object, and she reappeared beside it.

She suddenly stretched out her left hand, letting out a silent shriek.

The ground suddenly turned black, as if it had turned into a muddy deep sea. Twisted bloody vines grew out from it, splitting into many sections, with each section having four sharp teeth and an eye.

The blood-red vine wildly grew upwards, immediately locking onto the jellyfish-like phantom as it greedily sucked the dreamlike liquid within.

The phantom quickly collapsed, and the blood-red vine once again retreated back into the muddy deep sea.

But with this delay, the headless, charred Steve began running. He tore across the clearing and headed for the way out.

He still wasn't dead despite already losing his head!

Steve had only run a few steps when a sudden crisp sound cracked in the silence.

Pa!

Klein, in a black double-breasted frock coat with a matching half top hat, turned to him and snapped his fingers.

Boom!

The dirt beneath Steve's feet was violently lifted, and scarlet flames soared.

It spread upward, and when it reached its highest point, it spilled down like beautiful fireworks.

Steve's body was torn to pieces from such fireworks. His charred hands, feet, guts, and blood splattered everywhere. One of his fingers rolled to Klein's feet, and the brown, translucent Biological Poison Bottle fell in another direction.

The mutilated body, which was the last traces of Steve's existence, squirmed a few times before finally becoming still.

In the scene with the blooming fireworks, Klein felt his spirituality become more active, and the powers that still wasn't completely his had become more attuned to him.

In response to this sensation, he passed the revolver to his left hand. He took off the silk half top hat from his head with his black-gloved right hand, and he pressed it to his chest, and bowed slightly at Sharron.

Sharron's blue eyes looked over.

She looked past Klein to the carnage of Werewolf Tyre and Maric.

Sharron's figure disappeared, and Tyre's eyes reflected her image.

Tyre stood there stiffly, his black hair standing on end.

He raised his arms with great difficulty and pressed them against his head.

Kacha!

He twisted hard, and his eyes soon saw his spine which were underneath the cover of his torn clothes.

Pa!

Tyre twisted and pulled again, pulling his head out of his torso!

Throughout the entire process, he didn't let out a single scream or a single word.

He held his head, letting the blood constantly drip down. The corpse which had lost its head was still standing straight, without toppling.

Sharron didn't immediately leave Tyre's body. She appeared to be attempting something.

Very soon, bits of dark-green light emerged from Tyre's head and body, quickly condensing onto one of his fangs as its core.

It seems like Miss Sharron has a way of accelerating the separation of a Beyonder characteristic… The prerequisite to doing so requires her to possess the target, kill the person, and have complete control of the body… Enlightened, Klein bent down and picked up the shells that had fallen to the ground, stuffing them into the metal square box, one by one.

He was afraid that the investigators, which would subsequently arrive, would find the Artisan through the uniqueness of the shells and, hence, find the woman who had purchased the Briber and Barbarian formulas from him. Then, they would lock onto Eye of Wisdom's gathering, causing his safety to be threatened.

As for the bullets, they had long been sacrificed to the corresponding deities in the holy light and flames, just like the materials in charms.

Putting the revolver away, Klein was about to take a step forward when Sharron appeared beside the Biological Poison Bottle with an exaggerated speed. She made it float up and land on her palm.

Before Klein could think of anything else, the pale woman flicked her wrist and threw him a translucent brown bottle and a dark-green fang.

…To save time, she's helping me pick up my spoils? Klein was startled. He instinctively pulled out a piece of paper and covered the two items. He didn't come into direct contact with them!

At this moment, he could see that Sharron's complicated black regal dress had lost its usual tidiness and cleanliness. It fluttered gently in the wind, and a few strands of her light blonde hair were stuck to the side of her face, making her feel more like a person.

Hmm… This Biological Poison Bottle comes with its own lid… I just wonder what negative side effects it has… Klein lowered his head and examined his spoils of war. He used the black cap hanging on the side to reseal the Biological Poison Bottle so that it wouldn't continue to do him harm.

As for the dark-green fang, it was the Beyonder characteristic left behind by Werewolf Tyre.

As Klein placed the two items into a small metal box he prepared, and he used Holy Night Powder to create a wall of spirituality, blocking off the influence they had on their surroundings. He watched Sharron's figure disappear from the corner of his eyes. Steve's remnant flesh squirmed and produced a nearly translucent point of light.

Similarly, he was still on guard against Maric, lest he suddenly went crazy.

Amidst this vigilance, he discovered that the healing powers of a Zombie was truly astonishing. The bone-deep wounds from a moment ago had now basically closed!

Maric also gave him a profound look. It was as though he had remembered something and understood something.

When he was done, Klein walked a dozen steps away, picking up the square metal box that had been dug up by the zombies and shadows. Then, he

found Azik's copper whistle and the Master Key which were surrounded by human-shaped "candles."

He glanced at it and awkwardly realized that he didn't dare to pick them up.

The effects of the Scarlet Lunar Corona were still radiating through the clearing!

This was the last trap he had set up, one that would never be used unless all other means were exhausted. For this, he had taken the time to visit a hospital's morgue and test out what the corpses would do after they had gotten their hands on Azik's copper whistle. It allowed him to design a corresponding plan.

"Ahem. Can you stop the influence of the Scarlet Lunar Corona?" Klein turned to look at Sharron who had materialized again.

She already had an additional translucent doll in her hand.

Without saying a word, Sharron placed the Scarlet Lunar Corona to her chest with her other hand.

The circle of rubies quickly dimmed, and the light from the full moon disappeared from the abandoned land.

Only then did Klein lean over and grab the keyring with his fingertip, raising up Azik's copper whistle and the Master Key. Then, he stored them in the square iron box with concave bullet marks and quickly created a seal.

Meanwhile, Maric circled around and dealt with the scene.

Sharron pulled up her small black bonnet, and her figure disappeared before reappearing in front of Klein.

"The Book of Secrets is in your room," Sharron said calmly.

That is to say, no matter what the end result is, as long as I can make it back alive, I will be able to get a portion of the reward. I wouldn't have gone through all this trouble for nothing… Klein smiled and bowed.

"Thank you for your generosity.

"The official Beyonders will arrive any time soon. We have to leave."

Sharron nodded and asked, "Do you need any help?"

"There's no need." Klein chuckled. "I still have lots of fireworks which I haven't released."

As soon as he finished his sentence, he raised his hand and snapped his fingers.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The remaining explosives exploded, one by one, sending flames up into the sky.

They clustered around the largest and most eye-catching one in the center, producing a dreamy and beautiful scene.

Sharron's gaze was instinctively attracted to it for a second, and when she looked back, Klein was no longer there. There was only a spark that gradually dissipated.

Away from the clearing, he took a small detour northwest, preventing him from running into any official Beyonders on the way. One match after another was lit on the road, and the flames quickly soared up and then quickly disappeared.

Klein's figure constantly emerged from within them as he leaped across the flames and departed the West Balam dock.

Immediately following that, he took out a special bottle of extract and wiped it over his face. With a gentle wipe using a piece of paper, he removed all the paint.

Pa!

Klein shook his wrist and burned the paper to ashes.

Then, he picked up the cane he had hidden nearby, straightened his clothes, and walked out into the street like an ordinary person.

Not long after, Klein arrived at a cathedral. Its name was: "Lever Cathedral."

As many devotees weren't rich, they might not be able to rest on Sundays and were usually busy during the day. Thus, the cathedrals of the various Churches typically opened until the early hours of the morning, giving most believers the opportunity to pray and repent.

Klein looked up, tapped the steps with the black cane in his hand, and stepped inside.

He intended to avoid the subsequent round of inspections of the surroundings people.

…

A few minutes later, a Machinery Hivemind team appeared at the clearing surrounded by abandoned warehouses.

There were a total of five of them, each armed with different kinds of Beyonder weapons. However, all of them frowned when they saw the cleaned up scene.

After looking for a moment, they began putting in effort to gather clues.

…

Lever Cathedral.

Since it wasn't even 11 yet, there were quite a few people here. However, not a single person spoke. The entire prayer hall was so peaceful and holy that no one wanted to break the silence.

Klein sat in the third pew along the aisle. He leaned his black cane forward and took off his silk half top hat.

Wearing a black double-breasted frock coat, he clasped his hands against his lower jaw and closed his eyes. His expression was abnormally calm as he faced the triangle-shaped Sacred Emblem in front of him.

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CHAPTER 351
“GAME” OF QUESTION AND ANSWER

After a full half hour of uninterrupted silence, Klein opened his eyes and slowly rose to his feet.

He took his cane, put on his hat, and left the cathedral, taking a rental carriage back to Minsk Street in the dark.

At this moment, the vigilance and surveillance of the surrounding area had inevitably relaxed, turning into the shadows under the light of the gas lamps.

Shortly after midnight, Klein took out his key, opened the door to his house, and entered the empty guest rooms to search for the Book of Secrets.

It didn't take him much effort to find the old book, bound in thick goatskin, in the wardrobe in a room on the first floor.

The hardcover of the book was dark black, with two lines of Hermes written in crimson:

"Book of Secrets.

"Klarman."

Phew… Klein exhaled but was in no rush to read the book. Instead, he quickly constructed a wall of spirituality in the room, summoning and responding to himself via a ritual, and then he threw Azik's copper whistle,

the Master Key, the All-Black Eye, the Beyonder bullets, the bottle of biological poison, the Werewolf Beyonder characteristic, the Book of Secrets, and even all the vessels above the gray fog. He planned on waiting for the commotion to subside before deciding on which to take out and which to carry.

After doing all this, he didn't even bother to study the Werewolf Beyonder characteristic or the bottle of biological poison. He simply washed up and laid in bed.

There were two reasons for doing so. Firstly, reading the book was too time consuming. It was very easy to bring trouble to his body in the real world on this rather uncalm night. Secondly, Klein was aware of his current weakness, which was that the speed at which his spirituality was growing wasn't enough to satisfy his ever-increasing Beyonder powers and mystical items.

After such an intense battle, his spirituality was already drained. His head was aching, and he was drowsy.

Yes, the one thing that places the greatest burden on my spirituality are the Paper Figurine Substitutes, followed by the creation of "Sun Holy Water" with the Sun Brooch, but it wasn't used tonight. Next in the list is Holy Water Creation and Flaming Jump… Klein yawned and used Cogitation to get rid of the state of extreme tiredness and tenseness that prevented him from falling asleep.

In less than ten seconds, he entered the land of dreams as various fragmented scenes appeared alternately before him.

…

In the clearing surrounded by the abandoned warehouses, the Machinery Hivemind came and went before coming again. The person in charge of investigating this incident went from being a team captain to an expert at the rank of deacon.

Ikanser Bernard's brown hair remained unkempt and stuck out stubbornly, making it impossible to hide them even with a hat on.

This led to many members of the Machinery Hivemind to secretly joke that the deacon probably used a bomb to style his hair.

At this moment, Ikanser, with his cut jaw and facial features, was holding a silver mirror with ancient patterns on it.

On each side of the mirror was an eye-like ornament. They were built on the foundation of a black gem which looked serene and charming.

Ikanser surveyed the area and said, "Although the rats in the sewers are experts at interfering with divination and mediumship and had already dealt with the scene effectively, this is a mysterious Beyonder world, and there is no way to guarantee a one hundred percent success."

As he spoke, he looked at the silver mirror in his hand as he used his right hand to touch its surface thrice.

After pausing for two seconds, Ikanser took a deep breath and said in a deep voice, "Respected Arrodes, my question is 'Who were the participants in the incident that just happened here?'"

The surrounding darkness suddenly thickened, and the surface of the silver mirror began to ripple with aqueous light.

Soon, a scene appeared in the silver mirror.

Amidst the rising flames, there was a figure floating in the air. He was wearing a black double-breasted frock coat and a half top hat. His body was distorted, and his face was indistinct. Furthermore, his face was smeared with paint.

Beneath his feet, flames rose up and engulfed him.

As the aqueous light flashed, the scene changed. A middle-aged man in a dark red cloak appeared. His arm was burning with resplendent flames, but his head was hidden in the darkness.

Scene after scene was played out in front of their eyes. They saw a woman with a complicated black regal dress and messy blonde hair. However, her face was completely transparent, as if she didn't exist.

Beside this lady were two men with black fur all over their bodies. Only their backs could be seen as they were being pulled by strange arms.

Finally, the changes came to an end as it fixed onto the blazing flames that soared into the sky. The "fireworks" bloomed in a splendid and resplendent fashion as they lit up the entire scene.

In this dreamlike scene, the man in the black double-breasted frock coat appeared once again.

Twisting and retracting, he faced forward, pressed his hat to his chest, and bowed slightly.

Not only was his face extremely blurry after being interfered with, but it also presented a glisten of oil.

Just as Ikanser was about to ask his teammates for their opinions, several lines of text in ancient Feysac appeared on the surface of the mirror.

"Based on the principle of reciprocity, it's my turn to ask the question.

"If you answer wrong or lie, you will be punished."

The word "punishment" was blood-red, as if it were dripping with liquid!

The expression on Ikanser's face was twisted at first before it turned abnormally serious.

Soon after, the mirror's aqueous light flashed and a new line of text appeared.

"What's your sexual orientation?"

Ikanser was stunned as he felt the gazes of his surrounding team members all land on him.

…

Six in the morning. The sky was just beginning to brighten.

The sleeping Klein awoke to the punctual church bells.

According to his usual habits, he would just turn around and continue sleeping until it was almost 8 o'clock. But this time, he immediately sat up and looked around.

"Yeah, I didn't get raided on the pretext of checking my gas meter…" He let out a sigh of relief, and without even bothering to clean himself, he got off the bed and took four steps counterclockwise to go above the gray fog.

He wanted to study his spoils from last night!

Sitting in The Fool's seat, Klein started from the simplest.

He picked up the dark-green fang and observed it for a few seconds. Then, he conjured a pen and paper and wrote the divination sentence: "Its effects."

This didn't mean that divination could be used as a substitute for experimentation. With the fact that he held the item in his possession, and how he knew a lot about Prisoner, Lunatic, and Werewolf from Sharron and Maric, he believed that it was enough for him to attempt to gain some revelations from it.

After reciting the statement, he quickly entered the dreamland and witnessed one scene after another.

A vicious wound appeared on Werewolf Tyre's stomach, and his intestines flowed out as they were dragged across the ground. However, he only washed it with water and stuffed the intestines back into his stomach. He pinched both sides of the wound, and in the end, the wound actually healed…

Under the perfect red moon, he faced the sky and let out a long howl. Black fur grew out of his body, inch by inch, and the fangs in his mouth were distinct…

He waved his claws and cracked the steel plate that wasn't considered thin…

He ran wildly through the wilderness, increasing the gap between him and the group of pursuing gray wolves as he ran further and further away…

He made the attendants, whose eyes were glazed but cold, charge at their enemies without fear of death…

He also used a variety of weapons to kill people, including bombs, and he became stronger as he lost his reasoning while in his enraged state…

…

Opening his eyes, Klein roughly understood the characteristics of a Werewolf and grasped the hidden dangers of this Beyonder characteristic.

Werewolf Tyre had been under the full moon's illumination, allowing him to be unrestrained towards his desires. After his death, he left a relatively strong spiritual mark, so those Beyonders, who would use this Beyonder characteristic to concoct a potion to advance themselves to the next Sequence, had to resist this kind of effect at an early stage; otherwise, they would show signs of losing control.

However, the negative effects had yet to reach the level of a Sealed Artifact, and the Beyonder characteristic left behind by the Werewolf could still be used as the main ingredient for a potion.

That's good… Unfortunately, Zombie Jack's Beyonder characteristic has been swallowed by that strange door… I wonder where it leads to and if there's a way to get it back… Klein put down the dark-green fang, feeling both regret and sadness for his loss, before picking up the bottom of brown translucent biological poison.

He repeated the same procedure and performed a dream divination, but this time he didn't have the confidence to gain a detailed revelation. Therefore, he changed the divination statement to: "Its positive and negative effects."

In the gray gloom of the dream world, Klein once again saw tragic scenes.

Someone fell to the ground, scratching himself and ripping off his skin, flesh, and even bones…

Another person held his head, his eyes losing focus while his auras weakened…

One kept vomiting. Towards the end, the person who died was convulsing…

Someone burst out laughing, laughing so hard that he couldn't even breathe…

Some people stopped fighting and looked at each other. Then, they hugged and kissed each other…

When the scene reached the end, the translucent brown bottle was placed into a cup with water. The transparent liquid inside gradually turned amber in color and was drunk… The person holding onto the bottle of biological poison was weakened at first before coughing. Then, he touched his forehead. He found himself scalding as his condition turned for the worse…

The dream quickly ended. Klein tapped his finger on the edge of the long table as he attempted to interpret the revelation with great difficulty.

According to Steve, the earlier revelations mean that after the biological poison's bottle lid is removed, it would keep emanating its poison. As for which poison the opponents gets inflicted by, it's completely random, and even the wielder is unable to control it? The poison inside is really quite abominable…

The effective range of the poison cannot be deciphered via a revelation… Hmm, soaking it in water and drinking the amber liquid in advance would prevent one from getting poisoned? But how many minutes should the soaking take? Even if the person holding the Biological Poison Bottle doesn't open the lid, their bodies would get worse as they slowly get infected, and the ailments become serious? Uh, what's the exact cut-off time?

Klein rubbed his forehead, intending to do some experiments above the gray fog when he was free, but he didn't know if the Biological Poison Bottle was effective in there.

For example, in his current Spirit Body state, he wasn't afraid of being poisoned at all.

I'll leave it at this. I'll study it in detail in the future… Klein turned his attention to the Book of Secrets, which was bound in goatskin. He then casually flipped to the first page.

It was a title page with simple patterns on it but with nothing written on it…

Flipping another page, Klein finally saw the opening line of the Book of Secrets: "We worship the moon, not the Evernight Goddess."

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CHAPTER 352
BREAKFAST

Another statement about only worshiping the moon and not the Goddess? Klein couldn't help but have a look of contemplation.

The last time he heard about such matters was when he was learning about the Life School of Thought. He never expected that the Shaman King, who had lived his entire life in the Southern Continent, would also have a similar point of view.

—In the Pale Era, at the end of the Fourth Epoch, the Berserk Sea became a veritable reality. Thus, the Northern and Southern Continent were cut off from each other, and the Life School of Thought was formed in the early Fifth Epoch. Obviously, it was impossible for the Life School of Thought to extend itself to the Southern Continent before Roselle sent his men to find a safe sea route.

Shaman King Klarman was a historical figure who was active in an era more than a thousand years before the Northern Continent's invasion.

In other words, the two Beyonder factions, which were in different continents, had no way of communicating with each other and had chosen to worship the moon itself and ignore the Evernight Goddess at almost the same period of time.

Such a coincidence inadvertently made one consider why.

Could it be that the birth of a new god had taken away a portion of the authority related to the moon? But, as a deity, "He" shouldn't be so obscure and unknown… In other words, although the Goddess had snatched the

authority of the Moon, the followers of the primordial Moon God had survived. They had been passed down from the Fourth Epoch or even the Third Epoch. Even after the separation of the Northern Continent and Southern Continent, they blossomed into two groups, one helmed by the Shaman King, the other by the Life School of Thought? Klein made a rough guess, but he was troubled by the lack of clues to narrow the scope.

He gave up thinking about it for the time being and quickly skimmed through the rest of the contents of the Book of Secrets.

In the preamble, Shaman King Klarman said, very directly, that many of the rituals, deeds, astromancy, and summoning techniques in the book had originated from a primitive worship of the moon and described the corresponding honorific names in detail: "The one and only red moon, the symbol of life and beauty, the mother of all spiritual forces."

There's actually an honorable name! However, it lacks the more popular descriptions like those of the Evernight Goddess or Mother Earth… If there really is such a hidden god, His followers would inevitably develop a simpler title to address "Him" that's more suitable for praise than the worship of the primitive moon… Klein sensed something amiss as he began to analyze it with his own knowledge on mysticism.

Besides, using the Lady of Crimson to hold a ritual would very obviously direct it at the Goddess. But using an honorable name which is very similar but more detailed would circumvent the Goddess, pointing it to the source of their power—the primitive moon… I wonder what arcane existence it is… Klein thought with wonder and alarm.

Due to his lack of time, he skimmed through the details and found that, as Shaman King Klarman had said so himself, many of the deeds and rituals were directed at the moon.

For Klein, it wasn't a cause for concern. He didn't plan on copying them wholesale and end up provoking the primitive moon which he had no idea

about. What he wanted to learn was the overall structure, design, and details of the deeds and rituals.

Only by mastering the underlying rules could he come up with his own secret deeds, rituals, astromancy, and summoning techniques that pointed to the King of Yellow and Black.

Perhaps in the far future, I'll have my own mysticism system… Klein removed the spirit pendulum from his wrist and finally confirmed the authenticity of the Book of Secrets.

After receiving a clear answer, he was in no hurry to use the Werewolf's Beyonder characteristic to divine a formula. After all, he wasn't able to sell it, and for the same reason, he decided to delay the research of the Biological Poison Bottle for a while.

He quickly returned to the real world and drew the curtains. He saw the sun, which wasn't capable of illuminating the land. It was hidden behind the clouds and fog, looking somewhat pale.

"Achoo!"

Suddenly, Klein covered his nose and mouth, and he sneezed.

Only then did he realize that his head was aching and burning. He felt light-headed and had seemingly caught a cold.

I actually fell ill as a Sequence 7 Beyonder… Klein pulled out a piece of paper and sniffed.

He carefully thought back for a moment and quickly understood the reason.

The negative effects of the Biological Poison Bottle would gradually weaken the possessor and result in an illness!

If it was carried around even longer, then it might even lead to death.

And this effect couldn't be eliminated with the use of spirituality seals!

Last night, Klein's spirituality was almost nearly emptied after the battle. While his body was still weak from the poison, he still carried the Biological Poison Bottle with him and hid in Lever Cathedral for half an hour…

Adding the time spent on his return to Minsk Street, and he had embarrassingly fallen ill.

Thankfully, it's not serious… It doesn't affect anything… Klein sneezed again as he prepared to soak himself in a hot bath.

After washing his face and rinsing his mouth, he specially fried an egg to reward himself. The fragrance was truly tantalizing.

A Shaman King's Book of Secrets and the Biological Poison Bottle, a mystical item that's not worse than the Sun Brooch, as well as a Sequence 7 Werewolf's Beyonder characteristic. I made quite a killing this time… It's just a pity that I didn't manage to obtain the Zombie Beyonder characteristic… Klein sat by the side of the dining table. As he ate, he did a tally of his spoils.

What made his heart ache was the fact that he had used a total of eleven Beyonder bullets, each worth nearly ten pounds!

That is to say, I burned a hundred pounds… It's really like throwing money to deal damage… It's no wonder most Low- and Mid-Sequence Beyonders are so desperate for money… Klein glanced down at his breakfast.

They added up to only a few pence!

After breakfast, Klein idly read the newspapers, sneezing from time to time as he wiped his nose and mouth with a piece of tissue paper.

As soon as the church bell stopped chiming at eight o'clock, his doorbell rang.

Klein wasn't surprised to see the reporter for the Daily Observer, Mike Joseph.

The reporter with beautiful blue eyes and a thin mustache, but with rather rough skin, took off his hat and greeted him. Then he went straight to the point.

"Detective Moriarty, do you have time to take the job?"

Although he had a cold, he still needed to take on jobs like usual to avoid suspicion from anyone during this period of time… Klein, who had just finished a job, smiled and said, "I'm slightly ill, but that doesn't affect my fighting or shooting skills."

Mike suddenly smiled and said, "Thank you for your help.

"Let's set off now.

"Eh, Detective Moriarty, have you had breakfast? I'll treat you. As your employer, I should be in charge of providing you your meals today."

Inviting me to breakfast? Klein was startled.

"I just finished eating.

"But I suggest you go to East Borough to have breakfast there. That way, you can see a lot of things. I'll just need a cup of coffee when we're there."

"…No problem." Mike pointed outside. "The carriage I hired is waiting."

Klein sized him up and said, "Sir, you'd better change into something a little worse; otherwise, there will be lots of work for me."

Mike looked down at his tweed coat and said with some realization, "This is too eye-catching?"

"It is in East Borough." Klein pointed into his place. "I have some specially prepared clothes. Hmm, we are about the same size."

Mike couldn't help but exclaim, "You really are a professional."

Professional criminal? Klein lampooned.

After changing into ordinary worker's clothes, the two boarded the carriage and headed for the outskirts of East Borough.

…

"Achoo!"

Klein pulled out another piece of tissue paper, wiped his mouth and nose, and blew his nose.

Since there was no trash can nearby, he folded the tissue paper properly and stuffed it back into his pocket.

"The food in this coffee shop is okay. Of course, this is relative to the residents of East Borough." Klein pointed to the slightly greasy coffee shop at the corner of the street.

He occasionally came here for breakfast whenever he spent the night at his one-bedroom apartment that was nearby.

"Looks like it's a pretty good restaurant." Mike didn't think it was a coffee shop.

It was already past nine o'clock, and there were very few customers in the coffee shop. East Borough residents typically finished their breakfast at around seven and began to work or to look for work.

After accompanying Mike as he ordered stewed beef with potatoes, bread, and coffee, Klein looked around for a window seat.

At that moment, he saw an acquaintance—the elderly man he had helped while pretending to be a journalist.

He was the one who brought me here in the first place… Why is he only having breakfast now… As Klein thought, he turned to Mike and said, "You have an interviewee."

As he spoke, he carried his coffee cup to the "tramp."

The man was wearing the same thick jacket as before. His grizzled hair was oily, and his beard was obvious. However, he no longer looked tired, and his face was no longer as appallingly pale as before.

"Good morning, we meet again." Klein sat down across him and greeted him, noticing that his breakfast was black bread with a large cup of cheap tea that was worth a penny.

The elderly man raised his head, took a close look, and said in pleasant surprise, "Mr. Reporter, it's you?"

…Klein laughed dryly, pointed at Mike and said, "This is my colleague, he wants to do a deeper investigation on my previous interview."

Being an experienced and knowledgeable reporter, Mike didn't say anything further when he heard that. All he did was nod with a smile and greeted the elderly man.

As for the matter of Detective Moriarty pretending to be a reporter, it wasn't like he had only found out about it today. He was the one who had lent him his fake reporter's identification!

"So you really are a reporter!" The elderly man blurted out in astonishment. "But that doesn't stop you from being a kind-hearted person."

Klein smiled and asked, "How have you been recently?"

The elderly man drank a mouthful of tea and said, "Thanks to your help, I finally had a good night's sleep and ate my fill, so I wasn't that weak.

"My original plan was to go back to my original job—making shoes, but they didn't want me. They said my hands shook…"

He lowered his head and chuckled, skipping that episode.

"Later, I went down to the docks and found some work. It was tiring, but at least I made money. I've already rented a spot in someone's house for only six and a half pence a week. Of course, I can only sleep there at night.

"Well, that's how working at the dock is like. I went early today and ate nothing. I raised my hand and shouted my name and the supervisor's name, but I wasn't chosen, so I had to come back here.

"Fortunately, there's still a chance in the afternoon. Those people in the morning might be busy till late and won't be fighting against us for those jobs."

Klein listened quietly, occasionally taking a sip of the bad coffee. As for Mike, he took out a pen and paper and quickly made notes.

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CHAPTER 353
TODAY IS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM YESTERDAY

Finally, the elderly man, with gray hair by his temples, took a sip of tea and sighed with a smile.

"In truth, this is already much better than my previous situation, and it's much better than many of the people here. For instance…”

He pointed out the window to the tramps huddled in a corner.

Klein and Mike looked over and saw a group of cowering tramps lying on the ground in a filthy place that provided shelter from the wind. They were of all sexes and ages.

It was possible for them to never wake up again in the coldness of late autumn.

It was then that Klein noticed an old woman in her sixties standing by the street. Her dress was old and worn, but she was relatively neat, and her hair was neatly trimmed.

The white-haired old lady had the usual tired look of a tramp, but she still persisted in not squeezing together with the group. Instead, she slowly walked by the roadside, occasionally gazing into the coffee shop numbly.

"She's also a pitiful person." The former tramp who had eaten the leftover black bread also noticed the old lady and sighed, "She was said to have led quite a good life in the past. Her husband was a grain merchant and had a

very spirited child, but unfortunately, he went bankrupt and her husband and child died not long after. She's different from us, really, and you can tell at a glance… Sigh, she won't be able to hold on much longer, unless she's lucky to be admitted into the workhouse every time."

As he listened, Mike's expression changed from quiet to somber. He slowly let out a sigh and said, "I want to interview her. Can you invite her for me? She can eat and drink whatever she wants here."

The man wasn't surprised by this request. He merely looked at Klein and Mike separately, as if to say: "the both of you are indeed colleagues."

"Yes, I'm sure she would like that." He drank his tea, got up, and walked out of the greasy coffee shop.

Not long after, the elderly woman in her old but tidy dress followed him in. Her pale face slightly lightened thanks to the warmth of the coffee shop.

She continued to tremble, as if she wanted to release the coldness in her body, bit by bit, and absorb the relatively high temperature within the coffee shop. Even after she sat down on the chair, it still took her a full minute before she could truly warm up.

"You can order whatever you want. This is the reward for accepting this interview," Klein spoke on Mike's behalf.

After Mike nodded, the old lady modestly ordered toast, low-quality cream, and coffee. Then she smiled and said, "I heard that one cannot eat greasy food after not having eaten in a while."

Very polite, very self-restrained, not like a tramp at all… Klein sighed silently.

Before the food arrived, Mike asked casually, "Can you talk about how you became a tramp?"

The old lady revealed a look of reminiscence and said with a bitter smile, "My husband was a grain merchant who mainly bought all kinds of grain from domestic farmers, but we rapidly went bankrupt ever since the Grain Act was repealed.

"He wasn't very young to begin with. After suffering that setback, his body quickly collapsed. Not long after, he passed away.

"My child, a brilliant young man, had been learning the ropes of doing business from his father. He couldn't suffer the blow, and he ended up jumping into the Tussock River on a moonless night.

"His first suicide didn't work. He was sent to the magistrate's court, and the police and judges were very impatient, feeling that he was wasting their time.

"If you want to commit suicide, please do so quietly and successfully. Don't trouble us… Yes, that was probably what they wanted to say, but they found it too direct.

"My child was put in prison. Not long after, he committed suicide for the second time and succeeded."

The old lady spoke very calmly, as though it wasn't something that had happened to her.

But for some reason, Klein felt a deep sense of sorrow.

Nothing is more lamentable than a dead heart… He suddenly recalled the saying he had heard in his previous life.

In this world, suicide was not only prohibited by the Churches, but it was a punishable crime.

As for the reason, Klein knew very well why. First of all, many suicides were committed by jumping into a river, and without being discovered in

time, there was a certain probability of them turning into a water ghost. Second, the suicider often had very abnormal emotions. Thus, under such states, ending their lives was equivalent to a sacrificial offering which could resonate with particular strange and terrifying existences.

Thus, their corpses and certain objects that were around after them after their deaths would carry strange curses that harmed others.

This was probably where the Misfortune Cloth Puppet behind Tingen City's Chanis Gate came from.

Therefore, the seven Orthodox Churches forbade their believers from committing suicide through their own doctrine, and the royal family also promoted the corresponding legislation.

Of course, this seemed ridiculous to Klein. How could a suicider be afraid of punishment by the law?

While Mike was taking notes, he was about to say something when the owner of the coffee shop brought the food over.

"Fill your stomach first, we'll talk later." Mike pointed to the toast.

"Alright." The old lady ate the food in small bites, appearing very cultured.

Having not ordered much, she quickly finished her meal.

After reluctantly drinking the last mouthful of coffee, she rubbed her temples and pleaded, "Can I get some sleep first? It's too cold outside."

"No problem," Mike answered without hesitation.

The old lady thanked him gratefully a few times before she sat down on the chair and curled up into a ball as she fell asleep.

Mike looked at the man beside him and said, "You seem to be very familiar with this place. I wish to hire you as our guide. How's three soli for the day? I'm sorry, I forgot to ask for your name."

The man quickly shook his head and said, "No, no, that is too much. I only earn one soli a day most of the time at the dock.

"Just call me Old Kohler.

"Then, two soli a day. You deserve it," Mike decided firmly.

After witnessing this strange bargaining, Klein blew into a piece of tissue and was about to drink another cup of coffee, when he suddenly sensed that something was wrong. He turned to look at the old lady who was curled up, asleep on the chair.

Her face, which had turned ruddy due to the coffee, was pale again. The colors of her aura and moods had vanished.

"…” Klein stood up and subconsciously extended his hand to check the old lady's breathing.

As Mike and Kohler looked at him in surprise, he said heavily, "She's dead."

Mike opened his mouth, but no words came out. Kohler tapped his chest thrice and said with a bitter smile, "I knew she wouldn't be able to hold on for long…

"Such things happen every day in East Borough.

"At least she filled her stomach and died in a warm place. I hope—heh heh, I hope it will be the same for me in the future."

Klein was silent for a moment before he said, "Kohler, go and get the police."

"Alright." Kohler tapped his chest thrice once more and ran out of the coffee shop.

The boss glanced over but didn't come over. It was as though it wasn't something he needed to concern himself with.

After a while, a policeman in a black-and-white checkered uniform, carrying a baton and revolver, entered the coffee shop.

He looked at the dead old lady, asked Mike and Klein a few questions, then he waved his hand and said, "That's all there is to this. The three of you can leave after I get someone to collect the corpse."

"That's it?" Mike blurted out in surprise.

He was obviously not very familiar with East Borough.

The policeman sneered.

"Such incidents happen in large numbers every day in East Borough!"

He rolled his eyes and looked at Klein and Mike.

"You don't look like people from around here. Who are you? What's your identity?"

Mike produced his press identification, and Klein said that he was a private detective responsible for protecting him.

The policeman's face turned serious as he looked at Klein and said, "I suspect that you're carrying a gun illegally!

"I want to search your belongings. Please cooperate with me; otherwise, it will be considered a case of resisting arrest!"

Mike was suddenly worried because he knew that private detectives were usually unlawfully possessing firearms.

Klein expressionlessly spread out his hands.

"Alright."

He let the policeman search him, but nothing was found on him.

After the old lady's corpse was taken away, the disappointed policeman left. Mike clenched his fist and pounded on the table.

"A living person just died here; yet, all he cares about is investigating the unlawful possession of firearms!?"

Upon saying this, Mike looked at Klein and asked, puzzled, "You didn't bring a gun?"

Klein shook his head, pulled out his holster and revolver from under the table, and said calmly, "As a detective, I have a lot of experience in this area."

As a Magician, he could place the revolver right in front of someone and make it impossible for the person to notice it.

Moreover, since he didn't buy any ordinary bullets, the Beyonder bullets were temporarily left above the gray fog. His revolver was currently empty, but this didn't stop him from shooting with his revolver. All he needed to do was to use his mouth to emulate a "bang" when he pulled the trigger.

Upon seeing this, Old Kohler whispered from the side, "So you're a detective."

Klein pointed at Mike and casually explained, "I was also entrusted with a mission by this gentleman the last time as well."

Mike sat there without refuting. After a moment of silence, he said, "Although I've investigated the gangs and witnessed the miserable life of some prostitutes, I'm not familiar with the situation in East Borough. Please help me open my eyes to this place, allowing me to see if there are any problems with this investigation plan."

As he spoke, he took a few sheets of paper from the inside pocket of his clothes and spread them out on the coffee shop table.

Klein glanced at him.

"Interviews with East Borough residents of different ages?

"That's too troublesome, I think we can divide it according to location. In better apartments, five or six people squeeze into a one-room apartment. Others stay in the corner of a street that's sheltered from the wind, park benches, bars, and workhouses.

"In addition, they can be segregated by what time they begin work, and when their rest times are."

Mike listened carefully and nodded.

"Not a bad idea. What do you think, Kohler?"

Old Kohler pinched his nose and said, "I can't read… but I think whatever Mr. Detective said seems alright."

Mike thought about it, changed his plan, and said, "Then let's go to a nearby apartment and make a random selection."

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CHAPTER 354
TALES OF AN “ADVENTURE” IN EAST BOROUGH

Backlund's East Borough, at an intersection.

Mike Joseph saw a number of pitiful-looking children in rags along the street. He wiped his mouth with a handkerchief and planned to head over to give them some pennies.

However, his action was stopped by the former tramp, Old Kohler.

"They're thieves!"

"Thieves? What about their parents? Or are they controlled by the gangs?" As a senior journalist, Mike had never been to the East Borough, but he had heard of instances of a few gangs controlling street children to steal and beg.

"Parents? They either don't have parents, or their parents were once thieves or might still be thieves. Of course, Mr. Reporter, you're right, many of them are under the control of gangs, and it's said that the gangs will teach them how to steal. For example, they will hang a gentleman's coat on a wall, put a handkerchief in the pocket, and hang a pocket watch on the outside, and through repeated practice, the children will attempt to steal the handkerchief without shaking the pocket watch. Heh, this is what I heard from others while at the workhouse when I was homeless." Old Kohler babbled on, "I remember the youngest thief ever caught on this street was only six years old. Sigh, six years old…”

He seemed to recall his child who was lost to a disease and couldn't help but take out a cigarette from his pocket. He couldn't bring himself to smoke it, so all he did was take a sniff.

"Six years old…" Mike was stunned by this number.

Klein quietly listened and sighed.

"This is East Borough."

He looked around, composed himself, and said, "This place is closer to the jungle than to human society.

"Our interview has to be treated as an adventure. You have to learn how to avoid the territory of dangerous creatures, but you must also avoid those little things that don't seem to be too harmful to you. Well, I'm talking about mosquitoes in the jungle.

"Mike, if you expose the thickness of your wallet to those kids, then even if you protect it well and don't let them steal it, robbery is a destined outcome during the rest of the adventure. If you dare to resist, then perhaps there will be one more body floating in the Tussock River tomorrow morning."

"Mr. Detective, you're absolutely right! There are so many people in East Borough. No one pays notice to the few missing people every day," Old Kohler agreed.

Mike listened intently for a few seconds, and after a few seconds of silence, he suddenly said, "1.35 million."

"Huh?" Because of his cold, Klein's throat was obviously a little hoarse.

Mike stepped forward and said, "This is a preliminary estimate of the population count of East Borough.

"But I know that there's definitely more than that."

"That many?" Old Kohler was startled.

Although he had experienced the days and nights in East Borough and knew that there were a lot of residents here, he didn't expect there to be this many.

This is several times the population of Tingen City… Klein subconsciously compared it with the place that was most familiar to him.

He looked at the intersection a few steps away and asked, "Which way should we go next?"

Old Kohler looked up and said, "Definitely not straight. That area is under the control of the Zmanger gang. They're very vicious and completely unreasonable. If they discover any reporters doing interviews, then they'll definitely beat us up!"

The Zmanger gang? Isn't that the "brainless" gang that caused me to lose 10,000 pounds? He was some kind of executioner. Hmm, I don't even remember his name… Fortunately, the 10,000 pounds was eventually exchanged for the Seer's corresponding Sequence 7, 6, and 5 potion formulas and the All-Black Eye, as well as the Intis Ambassador's life… I wonder who ended up obtaining the manuscript of the third-generation difference engine… Klein instantly recalled what had happened early last month.

"Zmanger gang? The gang that is mainly composed of highlanders?" Mike asked thoughtfully.

"Mr. Reporter, have you heard of them?" Old Kohler asked in surprise.

Mike sneered.

"They're involved in a lot of cases, and they have some reputation outside East Borough as well. It's said that one of the members was involved in a case of Intis espionage."

…The person next to you was the person in question, the person who made the report, and also the victim.… Klein silently added.

"If you gentlemen know about the Zmanger gang, then why doesn't the police arrest them?" Old Kohler asked from his viewpoint, of someone at the bottom of society.

Mike's expression suddenly turned a little awkward, and he coughed twice.

"We can only capture those who have committed crimes. There is no evidence for the rest, so we can't arrest them. Moreover, East Borough is so broad, and there are so many people. It would be hard to find anyone who is bent on hiding."

As he spoke, he sighed.

"It's easy to destroy one Zmanger gang, but as long as a highlander comes to Backlund, and if they keep up their strong tradition of being combative while failing to find any other means of earning a living, it's only a matter of time before a new Zmanger gang appears."

This is a complex social issue.… Klein pointed to the left and right.

"Pick one."

Old Kohler looked at the right side of the street.

"That's where the Proscrito gang is active. As long as we don't provoke the girls who do business on the streets or in the bars, they won't notice us. Heh heh, it's still morning, so there shouldn't be any problems. They're still sleeping."

The word "Proscrito" meant "outlaw" in the Loen language, so it could be said that the gang who gave itself such a name was pretty self-aware.

Klein and Mike had no objection to this, and with the guide leading the way, they entered the district.

The buildings here were relatively better. The streets were less squalid, and the air was filled with the smells of oyster soup, fried fish, ginger beer, and the smell of various food and beverages left behind by street vendors, as well as the fishy smell of fish-related products.

While walking here, Klein felt an inexplicable sense of familiarity. It was as if he had returned to Tingen City, to Iron Cross Street, and to the street outside the apartment where he had originally lived in.

The only difference was that Backlund was closer to the sea and had more traffic. There was a lot more fish.

"This is a relatively good apartment in this area. Back when I loitered around here, I discovered that the gentlemen and ladies inside are all, hmm —quite clean." Old Kohler pointed to a pale yellow three-story building.

As they got closer, they noticed a sign hanging in front of the apartment. It had a picture of a pocket watch, a clock, and a screwdriver, with the words "Watch Repair."

"A watch craftsman lives here?" Klein dug up a similar scene from the memory fragments of the original Klein.

Back then, Benson, Melissa, and himself had gone to somewhere similar to repair the silver pocket watch which his father had left behind, but despite repairing it several times, it would quickly break. This continued until Melissa fiddled with it and ultimately fully repaired it. It became the most decent thing on Klein's person during that period of time.

After Klein's "death", the pocket watch, which had both monetary and sentimental value, was not buried with him.

It should now belong to Benson, right? I wonder if he will think of me every time he takes out that pocket watch… Klein suddenly blinked and curled the corner of his lips.

"Probably." Mike wasn't sure.

If anything went wrong with his pocket watch, it was usually sent to the original watch store he bought it from. The store would then send it to a repairman or to a craftsman who had partnered with them.

As soon as they entered the apartment, they saw a middle-aged man with a messy beard.

The gentleman had just come out of the bathroom and was about to return to his room. When he saw the three strangers come in, he hurriedly asked, "Do you want to repair something?"

What a coincidence… We actually met the craftsman immediately… Klein was slightly puzzled.

Mike took out his pocket watch, smiled, and said, "Yes, my pocket watch has recently not been keeping time well. Can you help me take a look?"

He didn't reveal his identity and planned to interview him over some casual chit chat.

The middle-aged man immediately revealed a smile and led them into a two-bedroom apartment which had its door half concealed. He pointed at a chair beside the table and said, "Please wait a moment. I'll go get my tools."

"Your tools are not at home?" Mike asked in surprise.

The watch craftsman shook his head and laughed.

"How is that possible?

"A set of tools is very expensive. There's no way I can buy them on my own. The only way is to pool everyone's money together to buy three or four sets, and whoever has business will use them. So, we moved in together. Heh heh, it's more convenient this way. If we live too far away, we will have to spend extra time and pay for the public carriage to borrow the tools.

As he spoke, he left the room and walked to the side.

So it isn't a coincidence that we met a watch craftsman. Many of the residents here are of this profession.… Klein was suddenly enlightened.

Old Kohler looked around the room and enviously said, "Before I fell ill, I lived in such a place as well. My wife would help others sew clothes at home. And my two children, my two children…"

Mike sighed and lowered his voice.

"I thought watch craftsmen were rich."

"Me too…" Klein covered his mouth.

…

After a cordial exchange with several of the apartment's residents, Klein and the others once again embarked on their adventure.

They had walked about a hundred meters when they heard people quarreling along the street.

The two women were using all sorts of obscenities against each other, allowing Klein to learn many words he had never heard before.

The reason for their argument was that the one on the left accused the woman on the right for making the apartment they lived in dirty and noisy. The woman on the right was scolding the woman on the left, thinking that it

had nothing to do with her. After all, no one asked her to recruit guests at night and sleep during the day.

"Is that a laundry maid?" Mike asked, frowning slightly.

"Yes, I know her. She's a widow, helping people wash their clothes with her two daughters," Old Kohler answered certainly.

Mike thought for a few seconds and said, "Take me to their place."

Old Kohler nodded and led the two of them around the argument before they entered the dilapidated apartment building that was obviously inferior to the one they had just seen.

As soon as he arrived outside the laundry maid's room, Klein immediately felt the dampness.

In the room hung dresses that were not dried yet. A seventeen or eighteen-year-old girl was squatting in front of a large basin, scrubbing clothes that were covered in bubbles. A girl, that was younger than her, was holding a hot iron wrapped in wet linen cloth. She was carefully ironing the clothes that were done washing and drying. Her careful actions implied that she had been scalded by the steam several times.

This was both their workplace and the place where they slept at night. Wet moisture permeated the room and seeped into their bodies.

In addition, the stench of all kinds of smells was very distinct.

"Doesn't it feel terrible?" Mike pinched his nose.

Klein replied in a muffled voice, "I've got a cold."

There was no humor in his words.

Mike released his fingers, walked into the room, and said to the two surprised girls, "I'm a reporter. I would like to interview a laundry maid."

The girl who was scrubbing the clothes shook her head numbly and said, "We have a lot of things to do and cannot afford to waste time."

Mike's request for an interview was rejected.

He came out with a heavy expression and silently walked back across the street.

After taking a look, he pursed his lips and said, "Let's continue."

…

City of Silver. After a thorough examination of Derrick Berg, who had experienced hallucinations both visually and auditory, he was brought to the bottom of the spire.

This place took in residents who showed signs of losing control, and various methods were used to save them.

Walking in the gloomy and creepy corridor, he suddenly felt a strange chill.

"Help!"

A sharp shrill voice suddenly sounded from a sealed room.

"Help…”

The voice came to a sudden halt, and then there was silence.

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CHAPTER 355
OUTSIDER

This… In the eerie silence, the first thought Derrick Berg had when he came back to his senses was to rescue that person.

However, the two guards that held him in the middle didn't show any reaction to it, as if everything that had just happened was just his imagination.

"Someone is calling out for help," the young Derrick informed the two Dawn Paladins.

On his left, a tall knight clad in silver armor calmly replied, "Don't be fooled.

"That's just the normal behavior of those Beyonders who are on the verge of losing control."

Is that so? Maybe he cried out for help because he just isn't willing to give up and lose control and become a monster… Derrick thought sorrowfully.

Following the change in his mood, the illusory, buzzing sound in his ears became more distinct.

After silently taking a few steps forward, the Dawn Paladin from before pointed to a door on the left and said, "You will be staying here for the time being. We will bring you your food and medicine on time."

As he spoke, he took out an iron-black bottle.

This bottle was constructed from the remnants of the straw-like objects left over from the City of Silver's staple food, Black Faced Grass. Upon encountering a liquid, it would produce a thin film, thereby achieving a waterproof and sealing effect.

Derrick took the bottle and gulped it down, feeling a cool sensation slide down his esophagus and into his stomach.

His entire being rapidly became quiet. The swaying scenes before his eyes stabilized, and the auditory hallucinations in his ears gradually weakened.

Creak!

At the sound of the iron door closing and locking, Derrick entered his own room.

The first thing he saw was a candle flickering with a faint yellow light, and then he made out a low bed, a chair, and a square table.

Other than that, there was nothing else. However, the walls, including the door, were all engraved with complicated and mysterious symbols and labels. They seemed to form a complete seal.

Derrick's emotions were also suppressed by the medicine. He sat down on the bed without the slightest hint of curiosity before lying down.

After an unknown period of time, he suddenly heard the sound of someone banging on his door. However, this didn't come from outside his room, but from his neighboring cell.

Derrick sat up and listened. He heard a sharp, high-pitched wail from the knocking.

His hair stood on end as he abruptly stood up, taking an extremely defensive stance.

At this moment, thumping sounds spread to the metal walls that were separated by two rooms, slowly smashing a protrusion.

Derrick was about to pray for holy light when the scene before his eyes suddenly lit up. It seemed as if the entire space around him had been moved to the outside world, just in time for the lightning to streak past.

The sound of the wall being smashed beside him had vanished, and the bottom of the spire regained its silence.

It wasn't an absolute silence. Rather, the sound of light footsteps echoed for a long distance. It only turned silent after the echoes continued on for a long time.

Derrick was wondering what had happened to the Beyonder in the neighboring cell when someone knocked on the metal wall on the other side.

Tak! Tak! Tak!

It was as if someone had bent their finger and was tapping lightly.

"Who is it?" Derrick asked, raising his voice in slight alarm.

The knocking immediately stopped, and after a few seconds, a deep yet rather old voice was faintly transmitted.

"So it turns out to be a young fellow."

"You are?" Seeing that the other person could communicate rationally, Derrick leaned against the wall and pressed his ear against the cold metal.

The elderly voice chuckled and said, "The person next to you almost lost control several times. He ultimately couldn't be saved today."

He completely lost control? Derrick asked through the metal wall, "So he's become a monster now?"

"No, not a monster, but a corpse. He was finished off by the item sealed in here." The elderly voice sighed. "I've been here for forty-two years. Yes, those guards told me that they've seen too many similar incidents."

Derrick was surprised and returned with a question, "You've been here for forty-two years?"

Normally speaking, losing control could be divided into three stages. The first stage was warning signs, such as auditory and visual hallucinations. In the second stage, the person's body and mind were already out of control, and from time to time, they would display either terrifying or strange states. As for the third stage, it was a complete breakdown, transforming the Rampager into a terrifying monster.

The time it took from the second stage to the third stage was rather quick. Perhaps just after discovering the symptoms, one would witness a seemingly ordinary Beyonder turn into a monster which could be found deep in the darkness.

In other words, after a second-stage Beyonder was sent to the bottom of the spire, they would either be treated with medicine, rituals, and other methods, slowly stabilizing themselves and allowing them to leave within eighteen months. Otherwise, they would quickly lose control and be purged. It was impossible for anyone to be locked up for forty-two years.

As a first-stage Beyonder, they would only take between a few days to less than twenty days to eliminate all the symptoms and leave, fully treated.

The elderly voice immediately chuckled and said, "That's right, I also didn't expect that I would stay here for forty-two years.

"I don't have any signs of losing control, but they believe I'm rather dangerous and can turn into a monster at any time."

Derrick frowned slightly and asked curiously, "What happened forty-two years ago?"

At that time, neither of his parents had been born yet.

The elderly voice was silent for a moment before saying, "I was once the captain of an exploration team.

"We found a destroyed city about half a month away from the City of Silver. Heh, this was calculated based on our speed.

"That city was similar to our City of Silver. It clearly has traces of it being ruled by giants, and it also believed in the Lord that created everything, the omnipotent and omniscient God.

"Unfortunately, they were destroyed; destroyed countless years ago."

Derrick wasn't a stranger to such matters. He immediately guessed, "Because you encountered some strange incidents there, you were determined to be at risk of losing control?"

"More or less." The elderly voice chuckled. "After we explored the core area, we discovered that the city was attempting to change faiths. They created deities that they imagined would save them. However, it was useless; even the statues of those deities were destroyed and spilled all across the land."

At this point, his tone suddenly became heavy.

"However, we met a person there.

"This is the first time in the past 2000 years that our City of Silver had met someone who didn't belong to our city!

"Outside City of Silver, in the depths of the endless darkness, there really was someone still alive!"

Derrick subconsciously asked, "You brought him back to the City of Silver?"

The elderly voice said after two seconds, "Don't you feel shocked?

"The reason why our City of Silver works so hard to explore the surroundings is to find humans like us. We finally found them 42 years ago!"

This is indeed rather shocking news, but I often see Miss Justice, Mr. Hanged Man, and the others. I often hear of the Loen Kingdom and the seven orthodox gods. Isn't it very obvious that there are people outside the City of Silver, with cities and countries? Derrick scratched his head, and without much experience, he pretended to be shocked.

"I-I didn't notice this point.

"This is truly unbelievable. Other than the residents of the City of Silver, there are actually other people!"

"…" The elderly voice remained silent for a while before saying, "Has the City of Silver's education become so terrible?"

Without waiting for Derrick to speak, he sighed and said to himself, "We very warily invited that person to the City of Silver as a guest. After some consideration, he agreed.

"We monitored and escorted him along the way back, but when we had almost arrived at the City of Silver, he suddenly disappeared…

"We searched everywhere, but we couldn't find him. After we returned to the City of Silver, my team members went crazy, one by one. They lost control. All of them! Not a single one was spared!

"The six-member council suspected that we were contaminated by something and that the person was not a human at all, but an evil spirit, a

monster. So, they locked me up here, and every so often, they would come over to confirm my condition, but they would never tell me what the problem is, nor would they let me out."

Derrick exhaled heavily and asked, "Do you remember what that man looked like?"

“…He looked very ordinary, and nothing about him stood out. He was dressed just like us, and except for me remembering that he was a man, I can't remember what he looked like… However, the elders should be able to use Beyonder means to directly see him from my vague, forgotten memories," the elderly voice recalled for a nearly a minute and said with a bit of pain.

Derrick pressed him, casually, "Did he say what his name was? Did he tell you about his origins?"

The elderly voice acknowledged tersely.

"He told us that his name was…”

He paused for a moment before saying, "Amon."

…

Sunday morning, in the factory district.

In the past two days, Klein and Mike "visited" many places in East Borough under old Kohler's guidance.

As a result, Mike witnessed five or six people huddled together in a single room, and that wasn't the worst case he saw.

In the poorest areas of East Borough, an ordinary bedroom could accommodate ten people. The precise division of the right to use the floor and the time of use—day or night—shocked the reporter.

Moreover, poverty didn't discriminate between men and women. In those places, people of different genders squeezed in tight spaces without being able to abide by societal norms. Certain incidents which deserved time in court happened all the time. Whether it was men or women, all of them were always facing the threat of violence.

“…Squalid, crowded, smelly—that's the most objective impression. I suspect that every one of them has a serious problem of having parasites… Because the houses were built a long time ago in the most rundown districts, they aren't connected to the sewers. Feces, urine, vomit and other things can be found everywhere. Every house here only has one public bathroom, or worse, every street only has one public toilet…

"They're extremely busy every day, but they can only barely fill their stomachs without any savings. As long as they're unemployed for a few days, they'll fall into an irredeemable abyss… I don't think they would even be afraid of death if they were given even a little hope…” Mike wrote in his investigation manuscript.

In addition, the reporter was impressed by the tramps who wandered the streets in the middle of the night, the girls who stood numbly by the street or in the bars, as well as the drinkers who completely let loose with their drinking. They didn't hold back on using violence and didn't consider the future. All of this left a deep impression on this reporter.

He grew more and more silent.

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CHAPTER 356
INFORMANT FEE

Cough!

Mike Joseph took out his handkerchief, covered his mouth, and coughed several times.

The smog in the factory district was thicker than anywhere else. The air was gray with a yellowish tint as though it was floating dust. Occasionally a pungent, suffocating odor that even Mr. Reporter, who was long used to the Backlund air, could not bear.

He turned to Klein who was also coughing softly.

"I've always been a huge supporter of the government's establishment of the National Atmospheric Pollution Council and the alkaline industry inspector, but only today did I learn that the problem has become so serious."

"If we don't take effective measures, it may become a tragedy in the future." Klein tried hard to clear his blocked nose.

Perhaps the whole of Backlund would be shrouded in smog that results in one's vision not exceeding five meters, and it's possible that an evil god would descend or be born in such a backdrop… he added silently.

Old Kohler didn't quite understand the conversation. He cleared his throat that was filled with thick phlegm and led the reporter and the detective around the watchman and into a lead factory.

Most of the workers were women. They were working busily without any protection, and the factory floor was filled with dust.

Looking at the "tiny particles" floating in the air, Klein felt like he was looking at toxic gas. The young ladies without masks were like lambs waiting to be slaughtered.

For a moment, he felt as though he was back in Tingen, back to the time when he had helped Sir Deweyville deal with the grievance haunting him.

He seemed to have already witnessed the future of each and every female worker—some of them with throbbing heads, some with blurred vision, some turning hysterical, some with gums with a blue line, and finally, they either went blind or fell dead.

It's like a large-scale, bloody sacrificial ritual. The only difference is that the target is that flashing symbol of money… If the Aurora Order, Rose School of Thought, and other evil sects could make good use of similar situations, just like what Lanevus did, there would be a huge problem… Klein covered his mouth and nose as he quietly watched.

Mike Joseph muttered in surprise and anger, "How can this be?

"How can they be like this?

"A while ago, all sorts of newspapers and magazines were focused on the issue of lead poisoning. Why aren't they using any precautionary measures at all?

"They can't even bear to use a mask?

"These factory owners are murderers!"

He truly is a reporter with a sense of righteousness. Even though he isn't young, he's rather stingy, and his acting is pretty outstanding, he still retains his original pure motives… But how is he so aware of lead

poisoning? Right, I forgot. I had gotten Sir Deweyville to advertise the dangers of lead poisoning on the newspapers and magazines… It seems like he did it well, but for some people, what does it matter if one or two of the lower class commoners die? There are plenty of people waiting for jobs! Klein thought with a heavy heart.

As a senior journalist, Mike didn't lose his reason. He quietly observed and asked a few workers who had changed shifts, then he left the lead factory.

Subsequently, they entered one factory after another, but lost their mood to discuss anything when they saw the squalor of the place and the intensive labor involved.

It was almost noon when Klein suddenly discovered that there were a lot of people gathered outside a factory. They were mostly women, and they were excitedly shouting something and were trying to rush in.

"What happened?" Mike asked Old Kohler, puzzled.

Old Kohler was also puzzled.

"I'll go over and ask."

He jogged to the outside of the factory and blended into the crowd. It took him several minutes to get back to Klein and Mike.

"They're going to smash those new machines!" Old Kohler took a breath and got to the point.

"Why?" Mike hadn't been in charge of similar news before, and so he didn't know much about the situation. As for Klein, he had an inkling of the reason.

Old Kohler pointed to the factory and said, "This is a textile factory. They wish to use the latest textile machines, so the number of people in charge of

controlling the machines needed will decrease. It seems… it seems like they're going to fire a third of the workers!

"The female workers want to smash the machines and get their jobs back, or else they'll probably not survive. Perhaps, the only choice is for them to become street girls."

Mike opened his mouth. From the shape of his mouth, he looked like he was going to say "fools," but he didn't say anything in the end. He just looked in silence and didn't even move closer.

"Let's go back. I've pretty much finished my investigative interviews." After a long time, Mike sighed.

All three of them turned around and began to walk out of the factory district. No one spoke as they walked.

As they were about to part, Mike glanced at Klein and spoke in a low voice.

"Do you think those women can still find anything else to do if the lead factories who do not provide protection are shut down, or if their bosses are sent to court?"

Klein gave it some serious thought and said, "If it's just a few factories, there won't be much of a problem, but some female workers might suffer from the hunger and cold while looking for other jobs, and they would gradually lose their strength because they don't have any savings.

"It would be a disaster if too many factories are shut down in a short period of time, not to mention the people who lose their jobs after the new textile machines are used."

The Backlund factory district alone might have thousands or even tens of thousands of unemployed workers, who have no food or clothing, roaming the streets like zombies. They might lower the conditions of their pay in order to snatch the jobs of others… Who knows how many people in East

Borough will lead an even more difficult life or die as a result. It would be a hell-like scene, and even if this world doesn't have Beyonder powers, it would still bring about a huge disaster. And now, the various evil gods are lurking in the darkness, waiting… Klein swallowed all the words in his mind.

Mike fell silent again, and after paying ten pounds and six soli, he left the smoke-emitting factory district in a carriage.

Klein looked at the carriage ride into the distance but didn't say anything.

Back when he was a Nighthawk, he had known and come into contact with the lives of the poor, but the impression left on him wasn't as deep this time.

A multidimensional observation revealed a human abyss in front of his eyes.

East Borough is truly filled with hidden dangers and tinder-like threats. If one isn't careful, it can be ignited by a cult… Klein pondered for a few seconds and said, "Kohler, I'd like to ask you to help me keep an eye on the situation in East Borough. Oh, only when you're not bogged down by work.

"I'll pay you, giving you the money to build a relationship with the other workers. Every week, we will set a time to meet at the coffee shop from before."

Old Kohler's eyes lit up.

"No problem!"

He made no mention of the price, and he fully trusted the good detective.

Klein weighed his options and said, "Every time we meet, I'll give you 15 soli as funds and compensation. If you provide me with information that I'm satisfied with, there will also be an additional 5 soli as payment."

"A pound?" Old Kohler blurted out in shock.

In his warmest and happiest days, he was paid only twenty-one soli a week, or one pound one soli.

"Yes." Klein nodded. "You have to pay attention to your words and actions. Don't be in a hurry to gather information. Maintain a state of speaking less and listening more. Otherwise, you'll be in danger."

*Informant fees such as these can theoretically be reimbursed, but I'm now a self-sponsored fifty-pence party***. Klein sighed as he gave a self-deprecating laugh.

…

Empress Borough, in Miss Audrey's study within Count Hall's luxurious villa.

The blonde was listening to Miss Escalante, her psychology teacher, as she occasionally stroked Susie, the big dog who was sitting beside her.

With dark hair that went all the way down to her waist, Escalante Oseleka noticed that the dog also seemed to be listening intently. She couldn't help but smile and pause for two seconds.

Following that, she continued with her introduction.

"There are currently no completely orthodox theories in the field of psychology. There are several schools of thought, such as Psychoanalysis, Personality Analysis, and Behavioral Psychology.

"Of course, research on the mind is not only performed by psychologists and psychiatrists. Many professionals in the field of mysticism are also doing similar work. Among them, the most famous one is, heh—sorry, I've deviated from the curriculum. Let's return to the topic just now and talk about Psychoanalysis."

Audrey could clearly notice Escalante's intention to guide the topic; therefore, she feigned ignorance and asked curiously, "Teacher, I'd like to know more about the research situation for the mind in the field of mysticism.

"As you know, I'm very interested in that."

Escalante pursed her lips, frowned, and said in embarrassment, "But there are vows of secrecy. I mean, these theories and research are part of the secrets of the mysticism circles. They're privy to those on the inside."

"Is that so… Th-then can I join?" Audrey asked expectantly. "They aren't involved in anything evil, right?"

"Ha, how is that possible? It's just a seminar organized by enthusiasts." Escalante diverted the topic after mentioning it. "Let's talk about this later. Let's continue with the lesson first."

I've got to know where to draw the line. I'll do it one step at a time. If this is the general trait of the members of the Psychology Alchemists, then I don't have to worry too much about it being filled with lunatics and perverts like Mr. A… Audrey deliberately put on an expression of reluctance when skipping the subject, but she still politely listened to the theoretical foundations of Psychoanalysis.

When the class was over, and after sending Escalante off, she returned to the study, carefully closed the heavy wooden door, and said to the huge golden retriever, "Susie, what do you think of her?"

"She's not sincere!" Susie answered flatly.

Then, she tilted her head and said, "However, what she said is very interesting. I think it's even more interesting than meat and biscuits!"

Susie, do you wish to be a psychiatrist in the future? Specializing in the treatment of mental illness in animals? For example, that horse which is

suspected to suffer from depression at the Glaints… Audrey suddenly fell into deep thought, wondering if she should prepare a special white coat and gold-rimmed glasses for Susie to look a little more professional.

1. Play on words of 50 Cent Party

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CHAPTER 357
HAPPENINGS AT THE BANQUET

When he got back to Minsk Street from the factory district, Klein had a simple lunch and took a nap. He didn't wake up until the evening when the sky had darkened.

But even so, he still felt exhausted, exhaustion that stemmed from the depths of his heart.

After quite some time of being lost in thought, Klein went down to the first floor and lit the gas lamp. He prepared to sit on the sofa and read the day's newspapers, but when he glanced around, he saw an invitation letter on the coffee table.

He was stunned for a moment before realizing that it was an invitation letter which Mrs. Stelyn Sammer had sent her maidservant to deliver a few days ago.

I almost forgot about this… The disguised matchmaking banquet… Klein put down the invitation letter and walked to the bathroom on the first floor. He used cold water to wash his face, sprucing himself up to look much more energetic.

Compared to when he first arrived at Backlund, there was a much thicker black stubble around his lips and under his chin. Although it didn't completely eliminate his scholarly bearing, it made him look more mature and rugged.

Someone who doesn't really know me well wouldn't be able to recognize me in person.… Klein exhaled silently, wiped his face clean, and put his gold-rimmed glasses on the bridge of his nose.

He took a short break, changed into a shirt with a starched collar and a black tailcoat, and then, quite formally, he put on his silk half top hat and picked up his cane stick and invitation letter before leaving the house for the unit beside his.

Amidst the tinkling of the doorbell, he saw Julianne, the maidservant, open the door, and Stelyn with her blonde hair coiled up high, and her ears adorned with silver earrings.

Klein took off his hat, bowed, and praised politely, "Mrs. Sammer, you are very beautiful today."

Although his words were extremely perfunctory, it was true that she was much more beautiful than usual. It appeared that her ability to doll herself up meticulously had experienced a significant breakthrough.

It seems like the adultery case made her besties with Ma'am Mary. Besides, Mary is now a tycoon with a wealth of tens of thousands of pounds, and she has been admitted into the National Atmospheric Pollution Council, allowing her to acquaint herself with many people in power. She must have had sufficient experience in the areas of makeup, clothing, accessories, and so on.… Klein nodded in understanding.

The corners of Stelyn's mouth couldn't help but curl up.

"These are my new earrings that cost eight soli."

Lady, you haven't changed in the slightest.… Klein smiled and handed his hat, cane, and coat to the maidservant.

The fireplace and the pipes in the room brought the warmth of early summer. Many women and young ladies were not dressed that

conservatively. Some of their fair arms were exposed, while others bared their creamy chests.

"Luke is talking business with some friends. Let me apologize on his behalf." Stelyn played her role as the female host to its fullest. "Have your meal first. I'll introduce you to a few well-educated ladies later."

Actually, there's no need for that. Just let me eat in peace… Klein smiled.

"I can already smell the fragrance of the food."

Since there were quite a lot of guests, with over twenty of them, the dinner was in the form of a buffet. Klein took a plate and walked around, and he found that the food was a lot more varied than before.

Cold trout, chicken pie, mutton stew with peas, salted breast, curry, roast beef, turkey, beef tongue pastry, ham, salad, and cream cake…

The alcohol provided was still champagne and red wine.

This suited a carnivore's palate very well. Klein, with his large plate, didn't make conversation with anyone. He hid in a corner and slowly savored the food.

It's not as good as the chefs at the Quelaag Club… From time to time, he would inwardly make comments on the food.

He was about to go for second helpings when he was finally discovered by Stelyn Sammer.

At the same time, he saw an acquaintance beside the lady. He was none other than Lawyer Jurgen with his serious expression.

Right, Jurgen is also a bachelor… Klein smiled and walked over, taking the initiative to ask, "How is Mrs. Doris's recovery?"

Jurgen uncomfortably tugged at his bow tie.

"She'll be discharged next week."

"That's great," Klein sincerely said with mixed emotions.

At that moment, Stelyn had already brought a few young ladies over and introduced them.

"This is Mr. Jurgen Cooper, a senior solicitor, who earns at least three pounds a week. He often gets a commission from the cases he handles, and he definitely earns more than two hundred pounds a year. Furthermore, he is young and capable. He will most likely become a great lawyer in the future.

"This is Mr. Sherlock Moriarty, a well-known detective. His income is unstable, but he is paid handsomely for every mission he receives, for example ten or fifty pounds."

Lady, isn't this too direct… Klein couldn't help but silently lampoon.

Jurgen, who was standing beside him, evidently frowned.

Without feeling that she had made a faux pas, Stelyn continued the introductions.

"Miss Sarah Taylor. Her parents are teachers at a grammar school…

"Miss Angelina Watson. Her father is a civil servant at the Backlund Police Department…”

…

Klein smiled numbly and greeted each lady.

After Stelyn was done, Jurgen said in a deep voice, "Mrs. Sammer, it's impolite to mention the income of others in front of others."

Stelyn wasn't mad; instead, she replied very seriously, "No, it's very important.

"If you end up liking each other and decide to start a family, then income is essential.

"Think about it, there must be meat, vegetables, fruits, milk, white bread, butter, cream, and other foods every day. It costs at least a pound and five soli a week on food alone, not to mention the alcohol. In addition, to rent a better house is nearly a pound a week. Yes, there's also the need to purchase water, gas, charcoal, soap, and the like. One still needs to consider transportation expenses. This adds up to about ten soli.

"That is just the most fundamental expenses. Are you not bringing your wife to a musical concert or to go watch a play?

"Don't you need to get new clothes every year? Ladies, I believe that a family must spend at least 30 pounds a year on it in order to be considered to be living a decent life.

"In addition, there is the salary of the maid, the cost of education for any children, the emergency money that's needed to be set aside for medical treatment, as well as the expenditure of some necessary decorations.

"Only with an income of more than 200 pounds a year can those needs be met. Only then can a happy family be achieved.

"Thus, in order to not delay everyone's time or cause any misunderstandings, I believe it is necessary to include this in the introduction."

As a lawyer, Jurgen was momentarily unable to provide a rejoinder. Fortunately, he always had a serious and stern expression on his face.

How big-hearted… But the basic etiquette is to tell the two parties this information in private, and of course, I know exactly why you're making the introductions straight to their face… Klein smiled.

"Yes, income is very important.

"Only with an income of more than 400 pounds a year can one host a dinner at this level. Only with that much can one afford to have his wife be dressed in beautiful dresses and exquisite earrings."

Stelyn raised her chin slightly as she tried her best to suppress her smile and said, "430 pounds. I mean that there must be some savings each year, to prevent any accidents or to have spare cash to invest into stocks or bonds."

That was her husband's approximate annual income.

After finding a common topic for the two groups of strangers, she left and greeted the other guests. Klein could also clearly sense that Sarah, Angelina, and the other ladies were more interested in Lawyer Jurgen. After all, he was a good-looking man, and his job and income were very stable.

As for a private detective who might be locked up in the police station at any time, they were not the first choice for middle-class women. Besides, Klein now looked rugged with his beard. It wasn't a surprise that the girls would remain a little apprehensive towards him.

After a short casual chat with them, he found an excuse to leave before hiding in a corner and eating while he enjoyed watching Jurgen's awkward and helpless performance.

At this moment, it was a wonder where his eloquence as a lawyer had gone to.

A few minutes later, the two children of the Sammers ran past Klein while playing.

They noticed the gentleman in the corner, stopped, and, with widened eyes, asked curiously, "Mr. Moriarty, we heard that you're a detective?"

"Yes." Klein smiled in response.

The little girl said innocently, "Can you tell us about the cases you've cracked?"

Her twin brother nodded immediately.

The cases I cracked? If it doesn't involve wraiths, puppets, or Devil dogs, then it's about finding cats or catching an adulterer. There's really nothing suitable for children… Klein thought for a few seconds, then chuckled.

"Alright, this is a story about treasure.

"An officer who had just returned from East Balam was suddenly murdered…"

He had mostly forgotten the detective novels he had read in his previous life, so he could only make them up based on a vague impression. The two children didn't care about the irrationality of the plot and listened very seriously, even learning to ask "what happened next."

Without realizing it, Klein was a lot more relaxed.

When the banquet was almost over, and he was about to leave, he saw that Stelyn's face was filled with joy.

"What is the cause for celebration?" Klein casually asked.

Stelyn raised her head slightly and replied with a reserved smile, "Mary has received a luncheon invitation from the chief secretary of the National Atmospheric Pollution Council, Mr. Hibbert Hall, on Monday.

"This gentleman is the eldest son of Count Hall, a true nobleman. He has invited all the members of the council and has allowed them to bring two or three friends with them."

Stelyn paused.

"Luke and I were just invited by Mary."

…

Monday afternoon.

Dressed to the nines, Stelyn Sammer, who was accompanied by her husband Luke Sammer, followed Ma'am Mary to Empress Borough where they saw a large building.

Marble statues, pools, fountains, gardens, and lawns reflected themselves in her eyes, making her feel nervous even before she entered the villa.

"Luke, does my necklace not match my dress?" she asked her husband as she tilted her head.

Luke shook his head and laughed.

"Darling, you're too nervous.

"You don't have to worry about that. The nobles only live in a place that's slightly bigger than ours and eat a little better. We aren't lacking in any way."

Stelyn nodded when she heard that, as though she had found her confidence.

Entering the villa, they saw the gorgeous crystal chandelier, the hall which could accommodate many dancers, and the plates of delicious food.

Foie gras, pan-fried Dragon-Bone Fish, baked lobster… Aurmir grape wine, misty champagne… It's exactly the same as the magazine's description. Stelyn looked at the food with curiosity, thinking that she could have such a meal on a holiday or during new year's if they scrimped a little.

Except for the Aurmir wine and the misty champagne… she finally added in her mind.

At this moment, her gaze suddenly straightened as she saw a young girl wearing a beige palace dress walking over.

The girl had blonde hair and green eyes, and she was abnormally beautiful. She wore a pair of white silk gloves with a pair of small beautiful emerald earrings. She exuded pureness and elegance.

She's just like an angel… Even though she had always been proud of her appearance, Stelyn couldn't help but exclaim in admiration, and she felt an inexplicable sense of inferiority at that moment.

"Hello," she clumsily greeted with the etiquette she had just learned.

"Hello," the girl returned the greeting gracefully.

After they had passed each other, Stelyn accompanied her husband and Mary to meet the distinguished guests and the noble, Mr. Hibbert Hall.

After a while, she walked to the balcony by herself, intending to ease her mood. However, she unexpectedly saw the angelic girl from before.

She was looking out over the landscape, a large golden retriever obediently sat beside her rose ribbon-rimmed shoes.

"It's so cute." Stelyn made an attempt to make conversation.

The young girl replied with a faint smile, "Let me thank you on Susie's behalf for your praise."

As she looked at the duo, Stelyn suddenly felt that she should own a similar pet for herself.

This was the only way to showcase the Sammers' dignity! She asked in a measured tone, "I heard that the nobles rear a lot of hunting hounds. Is this one of them?"

"Yes." The girl whose emerald-green eyes looked more enchanting than her earrings' gems lightly nodded.

"May I know how much money is needed to buy one?" Stelyn asked with a smile.

The pure and elegant girl looked down at the huge golden retriever and, without minding the question, answered with a slight smile, "450 pounds."

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CHAPTER 358
THE SUN'S WORRY

On a luxurious carriage on their way leaving Count Hall's villa.

Luke was chatting with Ma'am Mary about the distinguished guests, such as the chairman of the National Atmospheric Pollution Council and chief of the National Weather Service, Sir Ders Shaw; or the council member of the National Atmospheric Pollution Council and president of the Royal Meteorological Society; House of Commons Member of Parliament, Mr. Cave; or Midseashire Medical Health's director-in-charge and renowned doctor, Mr. Hawkesley.

They were all influential figures in the government, and the royal family or parliament. And the council's final report would be the most important basis for the planned Anti-Pollution Act and Smoke Emission Act.

The Coim Company, which specialized in anthracite and charcoal, was trying to promote and expedite the development, disrupting older but larger competitors from handling the changes.

"They will certainly not be stingy with their money and will certainly lobby the heavyweight Members of Parliament to interfere with our investigation. We must have a clear solution, just like what Mr. Hibbert Hall said. We need to take hold of public opinion and let the newspapers and magazines repeat the horrors of smoke pollution…" Luke was a senior manager at Coim, a key assistant to Coim's major shareholder and person in control, Mary, and he himself was quite capable.

As they chatted, Luke suddenly noticed that his wife was sitting next to him without saying a word, as if she had lost her soul.

"Stelyn, what happened?" Luke asked with concern.

Stelyn jolted back to her senses, forced a smile, and said, "Nothing, I'm just a little tired."

"That's right. You must be extremely tense seeing so many important figures. Now, you can finally relax. Exhaustion is a very normal thing. Actually, it's the same for me." Luke smiled.

Stelyn didn't respond; instead, she looked out the window towards the park with a lake.

Her ears were still ringing with the casual words of the young noble girl from before.

"450 pounds.

"A trained hound is priced between 450 and 700 pounds."

…

City of Silver, at the bottom of the spire.

Derrick Berg was locked in a small room, eating food and taking his medicine regularly. As a result, his mental state rapidly improved as his visual and auditory hallucinations were no longer present.

I'll be able to leave in a day or two… It's really hard to stay locked up in such an environment for long periods of time… The former captain of the exploration team in the next cell has been locked up for 42 years, yet he's still very lucid and rational. If it were me, I definitely would've gone crazy… However, the explorations and strange monsters that he spoke of are rather attractive and even terrifying… Derrick sat on the edge of the bed, looking at the candle that had burned to the end.

Before the Keepers delivered his next round of food and medicine, he would be placed in true darkness.

At that moment, he saw a gray fog spread out as the deep voice of The Fool sounded.

"Prepare for the gathering."

Such a change was fleeting. Derrick focused his attention and subconsciously counted his heartbeats.

However, he soon realized that this wasn't necessary because his current state was one of solitude, and he didn't need to avoid others.

Derrick, who was no longer counting his heartbeats, quickly thought of a question.

Would Mr. Fool's subsequent actions of pulling me above the gray fog be discovered and detected when I'm within the confines of the seal of the mystical object at the bottom of the spire?

These were two mystical items that had prevented the complete destruction of the City of Silver in the face of several calamities!

In his nervousness and uneasiness, Derrick, who had been unable to come to a decision, saw endless dark red lights gushing out of the void and engulf him.

The small, enclosed room turned completely silent. Even the sound of his breathing had become extremely weak.

Suddenly, the metal wall between Derrick and the former exploration team's captain produced a tapping sound.

This was the signal the two of them used if they wished to talk to each other.

Tak!

The other person bent his finger and knocked again.

After that, what should've been a third tap, that followed in succession, didn't happen.

After a long while, the tapping sound hesitantly rang out again. Following that, both rooms fell into silence, and not a single sound could be heard.

…

After finishing her luncheon, Audrey practiced on the piano before returning to her bedroom while keeping track of the time.

As she passed her father's study, she saw that the door was ajar, and a thick stack of papers lay on the table.

Those weren't there before… Curious, Audrey slowed down and winked at Susie.

As a Spectator, Susie often needed only a small hint to understand what her mistress wanted her to do. Of course, she would also occasionally pretend that she didn't understand, only wishing to lie still.

Susie, who had received the signal, trotted silently into the study, then stretched out her front paws, placed them on the edge of the table, and stood upright.

She quickly glanced at the front page of the stack of documents, returned to Audrey's side, and said in a low voice, "Survey of living conditions at all levels in East Borough, the dock area, and the factory district.

"Audrey, what do those words mean?"

Survey of living conditions at all levels in East Borough, the dock area, and the factory district? Why did Dad suddenly commission this survey? I don't remember ever mentioning anything about this to him… Audrey was confused and didn't bother to answer Susie's question.

She looked around, and seeing that the servants were at their stations and not paying particular attention to her, she raised her head slightly and calmly turned to enter Count Hall's study.

At the desk, Audrey looked down at the report and saw that the title was exactly as Susie had described it.

Hmm, it's document typed by a typewriter. The investigator is a reporter named Mike Joseph. There's the Goddess's Sacred Emblem at the bottom… Was this commissioned by the Church of the Goddess? But why is Father given a copy? Oh, Father is a believer of the Goddess, and the Church wants him to provide some support on this matter? That's a good thing… Audrey made a preliminary judgment.

She had originally thought of hiring others to do a similar investigation, but she felt that this was not in accordance with her intention of guiding others behind the scenes. It was very easy to be noticed and no longer be ignored by the other nobles; therefore, she had been hesitant.

Audrey reached for the file and flipped through it. She found that Mike Joseph wasn't the only one reporting on East Borough, the dock area, and the factory district. There were also quite a few people who had made their own field investigations from different angles.

Some of them even mentioned the proliferation of cults, and how some Beyonders were colluding with the gangs.

Phew… Audrey looked at the clock in the study and saw that it was almost three. She quickly gave up on reading the report carefully and returned the document to its original state.

Before she left, she picked up a book and used it as a disguise for her purpose of entry.

…

At three o'clock sharp. While the chiming of the hanging clock was still reverberating through the air, Audrey had already appeared inside the majestic palace via the dark red, illusory light and found herself beside the ancient long table.

She smiled, stood up, and bowed in the direction of the seat of honor.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Fool~"

Having received a light nod in response, she then respectively greeted The Hanged Man, The World, and company. She keenly noticed that The Sun seemed to be a little uneasy.

"What are you worried about?" Audrey asked.

This spared Klein's need to speak, having also noticed that Little Sun didn't seem right.

Entering this mysterious space ahead of time, he tidied the items on the table, tossing them into a corner along with Azik's copper whistle, the Biological Poison Bottle, Numinous Episcopate's copper whistle, and other things. He had then covered them with a thick fog.

Presently, there was only the Dark Emperor card on the table before him.

This was an item that matched the identity of The Fool!

Derrick didn't hide anything and immediately recounted his successful "malingering" and how he was sent to the bottom of the spire to be isolated for treatment. Finally, he asked, "Honorable Mr. Fool, will that mystical item detect my participation in the Tarot Club?"

How would I know… I don't even know what it is… However, there are currently no strange or powerful forces attempting to invade… Hmm, even the Eternal Blazing Sun and the True Creator couldn't find this place… Klein tapped his finger on the edge of the long bronze table and replied in a "relaxed" manner, "Generally speaking, it wouldn't make any discoveries.

"But some mystical items possess special effects."

Seeing that Mr. Fool had given an affirmative answer, Derrick was immediately relieved. He tersely gave acknowledgment and said, "I'm not sure of its special effects either.

"It's one of the City of Silver's top secrets."

At this point, he suddenly thought of what the former captain of the exploration team had told him. He blurted out a question, "Have any of you heard of a person named Amon?"

Amon? After a moment's thought, Klein remembered the source of the familiarity.

But he didn't answer in a hurry. Instead, he looked at The Hanged Man, knowing full well that this middle-ranking member of the Church of the Lord of Storms also knew "Amon," and perhaps he knew even more than he did. Similarly, Audrey also looked at The Hanged Man. She had also heard the name from him the last time.

Fors listened with a blank face, feeling that the things discussed here were always outside the scope of her knowledge.

Alger frowned and asked in confusion, "You ran into a man who called himself Amon while you were exploring the surrounding areas of the City of Silver?

"Or perhaps, you discovered related records?"

Derrick nodded seriously and said, "Yes, forty-two years ago, an exploratory team encountered a man claiming to be Amon in the depths of the darkness. After they returned to the City of Silver, they lost control one after another. Only one of them was left, and he was imprisoned at the bottom of the spire, in the cell next to me."

"Maybe he went mad too and that was just a figment of his imagination…" Fors, with a wealth of novel creation experience, postulated a guess.

Alger glanced at Mr. Fool who sat at the end of the table. Seeing him appear staid and without expressing anything, he boldly said, "Imagination is a possibility, but one shouldn't imagine the name 'Amon' for no reason."

He turned his head to The Sun and said, "In the Fourth Epoch, uh—about 1500 years ago in the kingdom we live in, there was a family with strange powers. They belonged to the Tudor Dynasty, and their surname was Amon.

"Even in an era with numerous High-Sequence Beyonders, the surname of the clan was taboo."

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CHAPTER 359
THE BLASPHEMER

Justice Audrey asked instead of The Sun, "Why?"

The Hanged Man, Alger, didn't answer her directly as he continued on, "Abraham, Antigonus, Amon, Jacob, and Tamara are the five great families that supported the establishment of the Tudor Dynasty, and they were second only to the Blood Emperor.

"Among them, the Amon family is the most mysterious one. They have the least history left behind, and they seem to have been distorted and covered up by some kind of power.

"There was a piece of information that came from the King of the Five Seas, Nast. The Amons are a family of blasphemers, and they wield the secrets to usurp the powers of deities!

"Also, the Amon family call themselves the descendants of the ancient Sun God."

Derrick Berg was left confused. In his knowledge of myths, there was no such thing as an ancient Sun God!

Among the eight ancient deities—Giant King, Aurmir; Dragon of Imagination, Ankewelt; Mutated King, Kvastir; Elf King, Soniathrym; King of Demonic Wolves, Flegrea; Vampire Ancestor, Lilith; Phoenix Ancestor, Gregrace; and Devil Monarch, Farbauti—none of them wielded the power of the Sun… Derrick seriously considered this problem. *If I really need to make a connection, the Lord that created everything, the omnipotent and*

omniscient God had shown powers in the Sun domain. Could the Amon family be "His" descendant?

Noticing that Sun wasn't saying anything, Alger stroked the stubble on his chin and said, "The Amon family is an ancient family clan from one to two thousand years ago. It is almost history itself. I'm very curious; why did the gentleman that you met appear around the City of Silver? What is his goal?"

That's right, how could the Amon family, which exists in the "world" of Mr. Hanged Man, Miss Justice, and company, appear around our City of Silver… Why did he fail to fulfill his promise after accepting the request of "being a guest?" He mysteriously left and caused the entire team to lose control. Yes, other than the captain… What did he want to do? What was he looking for? If he is a descendant of the Lord, perhaps his purpose is the same as mine: to find out the cause of the cataclysm from ancient times and to find out the truth of the curse… Derrick let his imagination run wild for a moment. After a while, he shook his head and said, "Mr. Hanged Man, I'm unable to answer your question. I'm also trying to figure out this matter."

Alger replied, looking somewhat disappointed, "Try to communicate with the former captain in your neighboring cell more. See if you can dig up more information from him."

Upon saying this, he thought for a moment and warned, "However, you must be careful and prudent. I think that person is very dangerous."

"Very dangerous? You think so too?" Derrick asked, feeling somewhat surprised.

The elders of the six-member council also thought the same!

The Hanged Man looked up at the lofty dome and took a deep breath.

"Those who don't think so are the ones without sound minds."

Seeing that The Sun was still confused, he shook his head and said, "He's the only surviving member of the exploration team. Just this matter alone is enough to prove that there's something tremendously wrong with him.

"He's been in the dungeon facing Rampagers for forty-two years; yet, he remains very lucid and rational. This shows how weird he is!

"Compounded with the matter regarding the mysterious Amon, the danger is obvious."

These were the little bits and pieces that Derrick had thought about in the past, but he hadn't yet connected together. When he heard that, he suddenly became enlightened and immediately said sincerely, "I understand.

"Thank you, Mr. Hanged Man!"

Audrey, who was listening attentively and observing, resisted the urge to cover her face with her hand. She felt that The Sun was even more naive than she was.

Seeing that everyone's curiosity had been satisfied, that even the gloomy Mr. World had slightly adjusted his posture, and that The Sun didn't seem to have any other requests, she turned her head to the end of the long bronze table and said with a smile, "Mr. Fool, I request a private exchange."

Again.… Klein was amused as he nodded and said, "Sure."

He immediately shielded the senses of The Hanged Man and company, rather than isolating himself and Miss Justice. It was mainly because he was afraid that the others might end up communicating out of boredom, thereby exposing the fact that The World was only a repeater.

After receiving the signal, Audrey smiled and said, "Mr. Fool, I have another three new pages of Roselle's diary."

After the Card of Blasphemy was stolen by The Fool's adorer, she didn't avoid visiting the Royal Museum out of guilt. Instead, she acted as if nothing had happened. She openly requested this to her father, and in the week after the exhibition ended, she got another chance to flip through the notebook.

Audrey thought that appearing unfazed was the best way to avoid suspicion.

If she maintained the constant act of feeling guilty and did not do what was logical, even if the Church of the God of Steam didn't suspect her previously, they would subsequently feel that there was a problem.

According to her own experience, she believed that the very first few pages of a diary would reveal a lot of information, so she mainly memorized the first three pages.

Without waiting for The Fool to speak, she quickly added, "I understand that this isn't a matter that requires a private exchange, but I wish to keep this from Miss Magician for a week or two. That way, even if she knows that you need Roselle's diary in the future, she wouldn't suspect that I'm Justice."

She had seen Fors and Xio once midweek, and by leading the conversation, she had naturally mentioned how her beloved dog, Susie, had chewed the Roselle notebook, causing it to be irrecoverable.

Typically speaking, she no longer needed to hide the fact that Mr. Fool needed Roselle's diary, but using her Telepathist abilities, she simulated what Fors would think, believing that she would have such a thought.

"What? That's a diary? That's a diary Roselle recorded his secrets in? Even Mr. Fool places so much importance on it!

"Eh, I recall that Miss Audrey has some. Wait a moment. She happened to have those diary pages chewed up by her dog a few days ago.

"Isn't this too much of a coincidence?"

To prevent Fors from having such thoughts, Audrey hoped to keep it a secret for at least another week.

After becoming a Telepathist, not only was she able to see the aura and the emotional color of the target, but she was also able to read the superficial thoughts of others and could also simulate their thoughts. Thus, she understood one thing—that in the process of "guiding" others, she had to try her best not to be abrupt or act against logic and reason. Only when all the details were subtle enough and reasonable enough to make the target not realize that she was being guided, would she be considered a qualified Telepathist.

"Subtle" and "reasonable" are the two most important keywords! Audrey concluded in her mind.

The reason why she went to read Roselle's "notebook" again was precisely to avoid being unreasonable.

She truly is worthy of being a Telepathist. She's recognized long ago that Miss Magician is one of the two people that she had recommended… Klein smiled in a noncommittal manner.

"What do you want to exchange those three pages for?"

This question was asked with confidence because, after obtaining the Book of Secrets, his greatest weakness in the field of mysticism had already been bridged. As for the secrets of the other deities, as well as his knowledge of Sequences, he knew a lot about them. Just any one of them was enough to deal with Miss Justice.

We will still be friends if you don't talk about the Psychiatrist formula… Klein lampooned in his heart.

Audrey had already long thought of her question. She remained reserved for a second before saying, "Mr. Fool, I wish to ask one question. Why is it said that the Cards of Blasphemy hide the profound secrets of the deities?"

Great question! Klein smiled secretly. Giving her a look for her to figure it out herself, he said deeply and calmly, "Sequence 0, Dark Emperor."

Sequence 0? There's still a Sequence 0? There's a Sequence 0 above Sequence 1? Is that a Sequence representing a god? The Dark Emperor is a god? A series of questions suddenly surfaced in Audrey's mind.

This caused her to be pleasantly surprised, satisfied, and shocked!

Restraining her agitation and unconcealable excitement, she took a deep breath and conjured the three pages of Roselle's diary.

Klein took it, took a quick glance, and confirmed that this was not one of the ones he had seen before.

"23rd February 1143. I've transmigrated to this world for more than a week. I have to write something down and describe the things I have encountered, or I feel like I'll go crazy.

"Hehe, if I write it in Simplified Chinese, I'm sure that no one will be able to decipher it. This world uses alphabetical words!

"I am now Roselle Gustav, but I'll never forget my real name.

"Huang Tao!

"I don't know how I transmigrated either. I carefully recalled and thought about it for a long time, and then I remembered that a few days before my transmigration, I bought a very mysterious silver plate with some strange symbols and patterns engraved on it. It was extremely interesting.

"However, it did not reappear after my transmigration here.

"It's not my cheat item!

"Hmm, this is a world similar to ancient Europe. It's after the Renaissance, and cannons and guns have appeared, but they're rather crude and primitive.

"As for me, Huang Tao Roselle Gustav, as a fan of online literature, I loved reading transmigration with technology genre novels. I know quite a lot of useful things and specifically read up on the corresponding knowledge!

"This is the stage where I can display my abilities!

"But, I realized that my f**king memory isn't good! I've almost forgotten everything!

"The Heavens allowed me to transmigrate to another world, but I wasn't given an outstanding memory or a system. Nor was I given a two-way door. How can I survive like this!?

"Alright, I'll start with some details. When I have the money, I'll hire a bunch of craftsmen, inventors, and scientists. I'm only responsible for giving them ideas!

"It's been a long time since I've felt so full of anticipation for the future.

"But I still miss Mom and Dad a little…

"Besides, the entertainment in this world is too monotonous. The one or two maids don't look that good, and their entire bodies exude rustic vibes. It makes me wish that Hongxiu.com goes completely bankrupt.

"I haven't finished reading Lin Gao's Five Hundred Good-for-nothings, and there are so many beauties that are awaiting me on Tik Tok. The games, Kings of Glory and PUBG, are still waiting for me. Thinking about them makes me feel a little depressed."

As Klein read, he nearly frowned.

Initially, he had determined, from the appearance of "Pirate King" and the "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," that Roselle had crossed over three to five years earlier than him. But now, he realized that the gap between their transmigrations couldn't be more than a year!

But why was there a difference of nearly two hundred years on this side?

1. China Literature's platform, a sister platform of Webnovel.com, that caters to Chinese white-collar female readers.1. A web novel that has been serialized since 2009, talking about 500 transmigrators.

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CHAPTER 360
A DIFFICULT CONUNDRUM

Klein thought seriously for a while and came up with all sorts of theories, but because he lacked the necessary information, he could only temporarily ascribe the cause of the matter to the difference in the flow of time between the Earth and this world.

Roselle and I have transmigrated less than a year apart, but in this world, we are separated by nearly two hundred years. That is to say, even if I were to spend two hundred years to find a way to return, it's likely that I won't lose the opportunity to meet my parents. At most, I'd have been missing for a year… Klein made a contrasting inference, improving his mood significantly. He instantly felt filled with motivation.

Of course, he himself knew very well that this reasoning was not rigorous, because this was determined by one precondition, and it was currently impossible to confirm it.

What if Roselle transmigrated after me? That might involve so-called spatial-temporal turbulence. When the time comes, there is no guarantee that I'll return to the proper time node… Klein poured cold water on his burgeoning mood.

Roselle's first diary entry was the product of having held back for a long time; therefore, it took up more than two pages. Klein flipped to the end and read the remaining two lines.

"25th February. What a boring world. There are no newspapers and so few novels! I think I need to help this culturally impoverished society, but the

premise of this is that I have to get some money and recall how paper is made and how the print press is done.

"As a transmigrator, I can only live on the pocket money that my new dad and mom gave me. I can only occasionally see one or two shiny Fermo gold. What a tragic story.

"However, hunting is quite interesting.

"28th February. This world might be a little different from what I know it to be.

"I got lost while hunting in the woods today. As a result, I saw an unimaginably intense battle.

"In the battle, the man who was surrounded had additional eyes growing on his face—a total of four eyes! They even shot dark green light! Th-this is f**king illogical! Is this a humanoid monster?

"This is actually a fantasy world, right?

"That monster's opponent was even more powerful. He summoned a pillar of light that burned with golden flames. Yes, I think it was summoned…

"Fortunately, they didn't discover me. After getting rid of that monster, that person left with the corpse.

"I, Huang Tao, am indeed the protagonist. I discovered the truth of this world a few days after I transmigrated!

"Perhaps they can recognize the mysterious symbols and patterns on the silver token… Of course, I won't ask. I want to become like them and crack it myself!

"There's another key reason as to why I said this. I can't even f**king remember what the pattern looks like. I can only vaguely remember it."

Indeed the protagonist? Emperor, did you pour all of your eighth-grader syndrome soul into your diary? Klein couldn't help but lampoon.

He was very interested in the silver plate, which might have been the cause for Roselle's transmigration, and he was eager to find out what the symbols and patterns on it looked like.

If he could really decipher it by relying on the mysticism knowledge of this world, then transmigration might not have just been a coincidence… Klein put down the diary pages, rapped his fingers on the table, and lifted the screen that isolated The Hanged Man and The Magician.

"Go ahead and trade freely." Klein leaned back in his chair and smiled.

Fors took a deep breath and said, "I would like to purchase the stomach pouch of a Spirit Eater and 20 ml of blood from a Deep Sea Marlin. It will be paid for in gold pounds."

I still have 430 pounds; I can afford one… she silently encouraged herself.

As for where the rest of the money would come from, she had no idea.

This is one of the main reasons that prevent many Beyonders from advancing… People cannot really attempt to spend beyond their means. If it wasn't for me having to become a Trickmaster to completely be rid of the influence of the full moon's ravings, I wouldn't even consider advancement once I gained rich Beyonder means. I wouldn't even make contact with this circle. I'll write books, save up money, drink tea, and stroll the streets with Xio. Once she's finished with that task, we can travel to different parts of the Northern and Southern Continent. We don't have to be afraid of danger or accidents, and we can enjoy life… Fors's thoughts suddenly began to wander.

Just when she thought that no one would respond, Alger said in a low voice, "I saw the Deep Sea Marlin's blood at the recent gathering of the great

pirates, but unfortunately, you've already missed it. You should've said so earlier. No, I'm mistaken. You hadn't joined the Tarot Club back then."

Then what's the point of saying this? Showing off your experience? Fors curled her lips secretly but said in all seriousness, "Mr. Hanged Man, please keep an eye out for me. I can accept a price between three hundred and four hundred pounds."

Alger sneered.

"The sea is even vaster than the land. Pirates might not even meet each other in half a year. Even on the islands that they dispose of their loot, Beyonder ingredients are seldom gathered.

"Only big cities like Backlund, Trier, St. Millom, and Feynapotter can have many ingredients gathered together. From your accent, you should be a Backlund citizen, or someone who has been living in Backlund for many years."

You mean that I still need to rely on myself? Fors almost looked up at the high dome.

At this point, Derrick said, "I know roughly where a few Spirit Eaters are active.

"But I don't need the gold pounds you people talk about."

…Fors said with a fake smile, "What do you want?"

The formula for the Solar High Priest potion… Audrey quickly answered inwardly.

Derrick thought seriously and said, "The Solar High Priest potion formula."

"That's a Sequence 7 formula, right? I've heard of it, but the formula for this Sequence is at least 750 pounds, and if you're in a hurry to get it, it can be

sold for more than a thousand pounds. Furthermore, the stomach bag of a Spirit Eater and blood of a Deep Sea Marlin do not exceed 400 pounds each. They're only worth 300 pounds most of the time. Do you understand me?" Fors tried to make it clear to The Sun that this was not an equivalent transaction.

Without hesitation, Derrick replied, "I can give you two or three of the Spirit Eater's stomach bags."

As for the additional need for a Deep Sea Marlin, he didn't even consider it. He had never even seen the sea before!

What can I do with the additional Spirit Eaters' stomach bags… Roast them or fry them? To be honest, I have no idea when I'll be able to sell it… Most importantly, I'm unable to afford the formula for Solar High Priest… Fors forced a smile and said, "I'll try searching."

She thought of the masked Eternal Blazing Sun believer at Mr. A's gathering who was good at purification. She thought of the Band of Light ring, and she believed that she could get a clue to the potion formula of Solar High Priest.

But I don't have enough money… Fors thought for a moment, touched her face, looked around, and then asked with great sincerity, "Everyone, do you have any good ways of earning money?"

As soon as she finished her sentence, she realized that everyone had fallen into silence.

Silence could be described by the soundless palace and the quiet gray fog.

From the looks of it, everyone faces this conundrum. As for Mr. Fool, he doesn't need money… Fors wisely shut her mouth.

Isn't the best way to make money be from owning farms, mines, plantations, factories, stocks, etc. Oh, you can also go through the kingdom's bounty

notices and complete them in accordance with the price and the period of time at a bearable level… Audrey knew that she didn't have any real experience in making money, so she could only respond with a few words in her heart as if she was joking.

Might I interest you in bicycle projects? Klein resisted the urge to manipulate the words of The World, which would expose his true identity.

After waiting for a few seconds, he maintained an unfathomable posture, making The World gloomily and hoarsely say, "Help me keep a lookout for the Thousand-faced Hunter's mutated pituitary gland and blood, as well as a Human-skinned Shadow's characteristic and a Deep-sea Naga's hair.

Although Klein only had 589 gold pounds left, he now had the Beyonder characteristic of a Werewolf and the Biological Poison Bottle. Furthermore, he was considering to find an opportunity to turn the former into a mystical item and then sell one of them.

In that case, that's more than enough to match the cost of Sequence 6 Beyonder ingredient!

Therefore, he planned to have the members of the Tarot Club help him pay attention in advance so that he wouldn't miss them.

"Alright." The Sun, Derrick, answered first, but he made no promises.

Compared to a Spirit Eater, Human-skinned Shadows and Thousand-faced Hunters aren't monsters that are easy-to-encounter.

"Thousand-faced Hunter? I think I've seen a fossil of it," Justice thought as she replied, "Yes, I'll confirm that after I return."

That fossil was in Duke Negan's treasury.

If it's already a fossil, its Beyonder characteristic has probably long been taken away… Klein manipulated The World and nodded noncommittally.

After a moment of silence, Alger said, "Help me keep an eye out on a person who was involved in the disappearance of the colonial slaves that was mentioned before.

"He calls himself 'Baelen,' a man with reddish-brown skin and has the clear characteristics of a Southerner, but someone has overheard him speak in a Backlund accent.

"The third tooth on his left is missing, but it could very well have been replaced.

"In addition, there's nothing special about him, and his height is also quite average.

"If you can find traces of him, there will be no problem with the reward at all, with it being at least one hundred pounds or something of equal value."

Even divination can't be completed with such a description, let alone carrying out a search for the person in the real world… Klein looked around and said, "Continue with your free exchange."

…

At the end of the Tarot Gathering, Derrick returned to the real world and found himself in the dark, cramped room.

He sat on the ground cautiously for a few seconds, but he didn't discover any unusual changes. He was finally able to let out a sigh of relief.

Remembering that Mr. Hanged Man had advised him to talk more with the former exploratory team's captain, Derrick walked over to the corresponding metal wall, bent his fingers, and tapped on it.

Tak! Tak!

He completed his signal, but there was no response even after a long time.

Did he fall asleep? Or was he taken to the six-member council? Derrick wondered while looking at the dull metal wall.

At this moment, an elderly and fleeting voice came from the bed behind him, "Are you looking for me…”

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CHAPTER 361
TRANSLUCENT WORM

"Are you looking for me…”

The moment the voice entered his ears, Derrick froze. His skin tensed up, and his hair stood on end.

Why is he behind me?

Why is he in my room?

What happened to the seal?

What about the effects of the mystical items?

His forehead dripped with cold sweat, and he subconsciously wanted to turn around to take a look.

But his instincts stopped him from doing so.

This instinct originated from the teachings of the City of Silver's General Knowledge of Monsters lessons and the strange scene he had experienced after joining the patrolling teams.

When someone is speaking behind you, don't turn around in a hurry!

Derrick raised his hands and clenched them into fists in front of his chest, then slowly, he turned around, bit by bit.

The room was shrouded in darkness, making it impossible to see anything. However, there was a tint of golden light that was expanding in his two eyes, transforming into what seemed like two miniature suns.

With his Light Suppliant powers, he saw a dark figure sitting quietly on the edge of his bed.

The dark figure rapidly turned clear, revealing a head that had been split in half!

In the middle of his head, two gray brains wriggled like they were alive, trying to get close to each other but being unable to do so.

The thick, viscous liquid on the severed surface of his brain had turned into thin threads, but they were shrinking like maggots.

Each eye that was on the two separate sides were distanced apart, and the nose bridge was separated from the middle. The color of the blood was bright and evident.

The left side of his mouth was open, but the right side of his mouth was tightly shut.

This terrifying monster was naked, and there were numerous dark red wounds on its body.

The countless wounds had torn open savagely, revealing rows and rows of white teeth. They said the same sentence in quick succession, "Are you looking for me…”

It paused for a moment, the corners of its mouth and the edges of its wounds were curling up.

"Look, am I not normal…”

Derrick's pupils contracted, and without thinking, he placed his folded hands on his chest and raised them to his chin, as if in prayer.

The small room suddenly became bright, and a pure beam of light, swirling with fire, fell from the roof and onto the monster's body.

The beam was not as grand as the one used by Derrick outside the spire. This was because of the seal here and the mystical item which left him isolated from the spire's exterior.

But at that moment, Derrick was stunned to see the holy light beam that he had prayed for was suddenly thickening. It was so bright that he couldn't help but close his eyes.

A few moments later, something purer and thicker separated from the magnificent pillar of light. It was like a man made of light with no facial features and no clothes!

The "man of light" suddenly coruscated and pounced on the monster.

All the "mouths" on the monster suddenly opened, as if it was letting out a blood-curdling screech.

Yet, Derrick heard nothing.

The monster began to tremble violently and quickly disintegrated under the burning and illumination of the "man of light," disappearing as if it were melting.

Just as it was about to become transparent, a phantom wearing a black classical long robe and a pointed hat suddenly appeared!

The shadow had black hair, black eyes, a wide forehead, and a thin face. It wore a monocle carved from crystal.

As soon as he appeared, the "man of light" exploded, and Derrick's vision was filled with whiteness.

When his eyesight was restored, he found himself outside the room, in the corridor with the metal lamps set in it, in the dim light of the setting sun.

He tilted his head blankly and looked into the room. He saw a tall, muscular figure in dark trousers and a brown coat.

In front of this figure was the bed which Derrick had been sleeping in. Dawn-like rays of light condensed onto a white leg bone, turning it into a pure white, sharp sword.

Next to the straight sword lay a translucent worm.

It was only the length of a thumb, and its slimness was almost that of a child's finger. One ring after another, of completely transparent colors, divided it into many sections.

It was a fleeting scene, and without specially counting the number of rings, he had a vague feeling that there were about ten of them.

The tall figure which had its back facing him reached out his hand to pick up the strange translucent worm. As he turned around, he sighed.

"It was close…”

At that moment, Derrick finally saw the face of the tall figure.

His hair was grizzled, unkempt, and rather disheveled. He had deep wrinkles around his cheeks, but there were no wrinkles at the corners of his eyes. Some old scars, that were either deep or twisted, remained on his cheeks.

He was dressed in a flaxen-colored shirt with a checkered leather belt around his waist, and his pale blue eyes were deep and weathered, like a

book full of stories.

For a moment, Derrick was stunned, and then, as though he had been in danger all his life, he opened his mouth in pleasant surprise.

"Your Excellency!"

In front of him was Chief of the City of Silver's six-member council, a powerful Demon Hunter who was over a hundred years old, Colin Iliad!

Colin nodded slightly and said, "We always knew that he had a problem, but in order to find out what kind of ulterior motives the man named Amon had, we intentionally didn't eliminate him directly, and we instead locked him at the bottom of the spire, sealed under the influence of mystical items, and we often let Beyonders, who only have symptoms of losing control, live next to him and talk to him. We wanted to see if we could induce some abnormal changes in him in order to learn the information we wanted to know.

"Unfortunately, he had been very normal until today, way too normal.

"Why do you think he suddenly mutated and attempted to break through the seal? Do you have any idea what makes you different from the others?"

So it was purposely arranged for me to live next to the former exploration team captain… After a few seconds of silence, Derrick said, "Maybe it's because my Beyonder pathway is different from the others. Sequence 9 Bard, Sequence 8 Light Suppliant."

In other words, the Sun pathway… If Mr. Hanged Man is right, that the Amon family is the descendant of an ancient Sun God, then it's normal for me to cause a mutation to happen to him… Derrick felt he knew the truth to a certain extent.

Colin listened without a change in expression. He sized up Derrick for a few seconds before saying, "We were monitoring him. The members of the

six-member council took turns, but we didn't expect him to suddenly mutate. There were zero warning signs, and his actions were very decisive and determined.

"What were you doing in the room just now?"

Derrick, who was considering the relationship between the Sun pathway and the ancient Sun God, didn't instantly realize what the Chief was asking about.

When he realized it, his mind was still blank as he seriously recalled what he had done.

I didn't do anything. I just knocked on the wall and tried to talk to him… Before this, before this, I was participating in the Tarot Gathering… The Tarot Gathering! Derrick was suddenly stunned. He felt that things might not be as simple as he had imagined.

He knew that he couldn't inform the Chief of his thoughts, but he didn't know what kind of expression to make, so he could only maintain his lonely, reserved silence. He said thoughtfully, "I knocked on that wall three times.

"Before that, the candle in my room had extinguished, and there was complete darkness. I had tried to practice some of my Beyonder powers."

Colin looked into Derrick's eyes quietly and said after nearly twenty seconds, "Unfortunately, what Amon left in his soul was not his original body. Moreover, this matter happened too suddenly, so we were unable to obtain the desired result…

"Before his mutation, did you sense anything amiss?"

"No." Derrick shook his head with conviction.

Colin's eyes suddenly flashed with two complex, dark green symbols, and he reflected Derrick's body in them.

After nearly ten seconds of silence, the City of Silver's Chief closed his eyes and said, "Your condition has stabilized. You don't need any more treatment, so you can go back now."

Derrick was startled.

"Alright."

He watched Demon Hunter Colin Iliad turn back into the room, pick up the sharp white sword, and turned it over and over in his hands.

He quietly took a deep breath and walked along the corridor towards the exit. On the way, he met the Keepers who had rushed over one after the other.

He slowly walked back home and closed the door. He carefully observed his surroundings for a while, then he sat down on the edge of the bed and recited in a low voice, "The Fool that doesn't belong to this era, you are the mysterious ruler above the gray fog; you are the King of Yellow and Black who wields good luck.

"I've just experienced something terrifying…”

Derrick recounted what had happened and mentioned his two guesses.

After doing all of that, he felt much more at ease.

And with his tense state of mind relaxing, he felt immense exhaustion wash through him. He lied down and quickly fell asleep.

In the silent and dark room, flashes of lightning would occasionally illuminate everything. Otherwise, it would seem like the dark night.

The sleeping Derrick suddenly flicked his right index finger and leisurely tapped it on the bed.

Once, twice, thrice…

…

After the Tarot Gathering, Klein didn't divine the Werewolf's Beyonder characteristic or the Biological Poison Bottle due to his spirituality expenditure. Instead, he went straight back to the real world for a nap. After twenty minutes, he woke up and drew the curtain, allowing the light that penetrated through the mist to bring a certain degree of light into the room.

Sitting on the chair in front of the desk, Klein calmed down and began considering what he needed to do in the short term.

The main goal is to continue concluding the rules of a Magician and make adjustments according to the subtle feedback from my spirituality.

Although rules like "never performing unprepared," "the need to have a stage and a performance," and "completing a performance using means of diversion" do not seem problematic at the moment, if I were to continue acting this way and performing slight adjustments, I'll eventually digest the potion and reach the advancement state. But this sort of acting isn't sufficient. I'm still lacking some of the important rules. Currently, what I'm doing will make the digestion slow and not thorough. Perhaps, it will take a year, or perhaps even two or three years before my Sequence advancement is possible.

And Ince Zangwill won't remain there waiting for me! Only through becoming a High-Sequence Beyonder as soon as possible will I be qualified to take revenge!

Therefore, figuring out the other Magician rules is of utmost importance. I'll first determine them through experimentation whether the applause from

an audience will stir my spirituality and result in better digestion of the potion.

Just as Klein was deep in thought, he heard a series of illusory, stacked pleas.

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CHAPTER 362
THE SECRET DEED RITUAL

A male voice? Is it Mr. Hanged Man or Little Sun? Klein looked out the window at the gloomy sky, got up, went into the bathroom next door. He locked the door, took four steps counterclockwise, and arrived above the gray fog.

Within that mysterious space, a towering, ancient palace quietly stood. The illusory male voice echoed in a stacked, continuous manner.

Klein glanced at it and confirmed that the prayer was from Little Sun.

He sat in The Fool's seat and stretched out his right hand, emanating his spirituality to touch the corresponding crimson star.

Suddenly, the voice became clear and layered, and Klein quickly figured out what The Sun was talking about.

The former captain of the exploration team, who had seen Amon, suddenly lost control and strangely penetrated through the seal, arriving at his room. Fortunately, the City of Silver took this matter seriously and had been constantly prepared for it; otherwise, it would have led to a tragedy.

The Sun believes that it's impossible that there was no reason for the man's loss of control. He came up with two possibilities—one was that his own Beyonder pathway met the requirements of being the ancient Sun God's descendant, and the other possibility was that the man might have sensed the Tarot Gathering and Mr. Fool's secret pull.

If it were the former, he wouldn't have waited until today and waited until the end of the Tarot Gathering before losing control… The latter reason has a greater probability… Hmm, this is the first time I've encountered someone who can sense the matters regarding the gray fog… That Amon is very scary! It's no wonder their family was known as the Blasphemers during the Fourth Epoch. Even their last names are taboo… Klein subconsciously looked at the crimson star and the corresponding supplicant. He carefully observed the blurry image of Little Sun to see if there was anything abnormal with him.

Klein believed that Amon wouldn't be so easily eliminated. Even if it was as the Chief of the City of Silver had said—that his body wasn't his main body—it didn't make it any easier to eliminate him!

The only possibility is that the powerhouses in the City of Silver have been using mystical items to monitor him, but is that even possible?

When he decided to let the former leader of the exploration team lose control and silently penetrate through the seal, he definitely had a plan in place…

In the midst of his thoughts, Klein's eyes suddenly froze as he looked at the prayer scene.

Entwined on the indistinct body of The Sun was a translucent and illusory figure!

He had hands and feet, but he was like a python, twisting around The Sun while his head rested behind The Sun's head!

In the blurred image, he was wearing a black classical robe, a pointed hat, and a crystal monocle.

The Sun didn't notice any of this!

…Klein almost drew a cold gasp, shocked at the strange means that were available to that entity.

He vaguely understood the other party's intention.

By residing in the Spirit Body of The Sun, he is waiting for the next Tarot Gathering, allowing him to sneak above the gray fog, like a virus or a Trojan horse!

When that happens, my control over this mysterious space might be snatched away… He's truly a Blasphemer! Fortunately, Little Sun is rather naive and straightforward, so he immediately reported this to me. Through the corresponding crimson stars and the power of the gray fog, I was able to discover his peculiar state… Klein drew a breath and tried to calm himself.

At that moment, he had to respond. He had to quickly think of a way to get Amon out of The Sun, or temporarily expel The Sun out of the Tarot Gathering.

Looking at himself, from his Beyonder powers of Magician, Clown, and Seer; to Azik's copper whistle; the Dark Emperor card; the All-Black Eye; the Sun Brooch; the Biological Poison Bottle; and so on, Klein couldn't find a way to deal with Amon.

Amon's Sequence is definitely above Sequence 4, and the means available to him must be sufficiently strange. To be able to escape from the City of Silver's mystical artifacts and powerful Demon Hunters, it means that he isn't something which can be easily eliminated with ordinary objects or powers!

After thinking for a moment and looking around, Klein discovered there was only one possibility of eliminating Amon—the gray fog, this mysterious space.

I have to think of a way to pry its power away… The sacrifice and bestowment ritual from before are examples… With this train of thought, Klein turned his gaze to the Book of Secrets.

This mysticism book, which originated from the ancient Shaman King Klarman, recorded many mysterious rituals that required help from the primitive moon.

Klein, who had been reading it before, vaguely remembered that a few of them were suitable for such a scenario.

Of course, it was unknown what changes he would have to make after directing it towards The Fool. He could only keep his hopes up and try his best… As Klein flipped through the book, his eyes stopped at a ritual.

"Blood Moon Sacrifice."

This ritualistic magic was clearly different from the simple ones that Klein had learned before, and it used the element of a secret deed.

The process was to use a material rich in spirituality, preferably the blood of a Beyonder, to write the honorable name of the target of the secret deed on an animal hide, and to draw the corresponding symbols and magic labels. If necessary, the specific circumstances of a given time and place also had to be taken into account.

When this was done, the ritual host would set up the altar, pick up the piece of hide, and repeat the honorable name, letting their spirituality to seep into the hide, gradually spreading it out, little by little to form a hidden bond with the corresponding great being, and obtaining the corresponding spiritual experience or help.

The final outcome of this ritual was unknown. It all depended on what the hidden or great being bestowed. Or rather, according to one's characteristics, the knowledge and power one could gain through that secret bond were also different.

This kind of rather vague and subjective ritual gave Klein enough freedom to modify and manipulate it. If he had assumed the stance of forcefully eliminating Amon from the beginning, then Amon would have certainly resisted and created a dangerous accident.

If the target of the secret deed were the True Creator or the Hidden Sage, it's normal for the ritual to end in madness… Klein mumbled as he conjured a pen and paper and began to modify the Blood Moon Sacrifice to turn it into a secret deed ritual that belonged to The Fool.

First, he replaced the honorable name with the three sentences of "King of Yellow and Black." Then, he replaced the symbolic symbol with the one behind the seat of The Fool. It was a unique symbol made up of a part of the hidden Pupil-less Eye and the Contorted Lines.

The third was to design the corresponding magic label according to the symbols and his mysticism knowledge. This was the most difficult step. Any mistakes would cause the entire ritual to produce unpredictable developments.

Lastly, he had to modify the layout of the altar to make it closer to The Fool and to the King of Yellow and Black.

After busying himself for quite a while, Klein had a new secret deed ritual, but he was unsure if it would work.

He examined it over and over again, and after confirming that there were no mistakes, he emanated his spirituality and heavily replied to Little Sun, "I'm aware.

"I have something to task you with.

"Let's see if this ritual works."

…

The Sun Derrick suddenly woke up from his dreamless slumber. Before his eyes were the boundless gray fog and the lofty Fool. His ears echoed with bits of illusory and distant words.

He knew that Mr. Fool would occasionally ask the members of the Tarot Club to make small attempts as if to verify something. He wasn't surprised by this, and he immediately sat up and began to search for a monster hide, exotic herbs, and other objects.

As for the spiritual materials described in the ceremony, Derrick didn't waste time heading to the spire or the underground market to buy them. He picked up the Axe of Hurricane and sliced a tiny wound in his arm.

Silently, he used his own blood as ink, and he wrote the name of The Fool and its corresponding symbols and magic labels on the pitted monster hide.

After a while, he put down the quill that was stained with blood. He saw many mysterious symbols on the hide, and the colors were bright red and had an indescribable hint of demonic dealings.

After dealing with the wound on his arm, the pale-faced Derrick quickly finished setting up the altar. He picked up the blood-red word and all kinds of terrifying symbols from the hide and held it tightly in his hand.

He looked at the flickering candle flame in front of him, closed his eyes, lowered his head, and repeatedly recited the honorable names of The Fool, "The Fool that doesn't belong to this era, the mysterious ruler above the gray fog; the King of Yellow and Black who wields good luck."

…

Derrick's spirituality slowly flowed out and infused the hide, and the words in Jotun and the magic symbols on it quickly brightened. It was a startling crimson color.

At that moment, he, who had already entered into a Cogitation state, was only feeling his psyche gradually dissipate as it floated to an immeasurable height, coming into contact with the grayish-white fog, and the hidden great being.

…

Above the gray fog, inside the palace that looked like a giant's residence.

Noticing that The Sun had not shown any signs of delay in preparing the ritual, Klein chose to wait there above the gray fog.

Suddenly, he felt the entire mysterious space start to tremble. That motionless grayish white fog started to flow!

The crimson star corresponding to The Sun shined brightly and emitted illusory rays of light like the tide.

These countless rays of light condensed into a blurry figure of The Sun. He was in a supplicating position with his eyes closed and his head lowered, waiting for the moment when he could bond with the great being and gain a miraculous spiritual experience.

The translucent figure on his body was still tightly coiled like a python, but its head was already tilted back as it looked up. The crystal monocle it wore flashed dimly.

He's searching for the subtle, hidden connection… He should've recognized that this is just a secret deed ritual, but he didn't do anything to stop it. Is he trying to find the connection through it? Klein suddenly came to this realization, and felt the gray fog and the mysterious space above it simultaneously rippling with power!

However, for the time being, Klein couldn't combine these forces with his own spirituality to create a Beyonder effect that could exorcise the evil spirit, unless there was another corresponding ritual.

Clearly, this was impossible. He couldn't maintain two rituals simultaneously!

Klein's eyes quickly swept the area in front of him, and his gaze stopped at the Sun Brooch.

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CHAPTER 363
HIGH-LEVEL AUTHORITY

Perhaps I can use it as a "bridge"…Just as this thought flashed through Klein's mind, his right hand grabbed the Sunbird-shaped dark golden brooch.

At the same time, he used his spirituality as a whirlpool to attract the pried power from the mysterious space towards him, making it surge towards the Sun Brooch like a tidal wave.

The quivering above the gray fog became obvious. Little dots of pure light intertwined and swept toward Klein, blending with his spirituality.

The Sunbird-shaped dark golden brooch began to glow with a dazzling brilliance. It grew brighter and denser, and in an instant, drop after drop of a translucent golden liquid began to condense.

The liquid quickly merged together and formed a human figure that was as tall as Klein. It was a golden figure, a sacred figure!

It does work… Sun Holy Water that's created from a higher level of power is closer to a God's bestowment! Klein's heart was filled with joy. He turned his gaze back to the crimson star which symbolized The Sun. He then looked at the figure that was waiting to bond with the great being.

As for the divine figure condensed by the golden Sun Holy Water, it wasn't a result of the Sun Brooch, but simply a manifestation of Klein's subconscious thoughts.

Reaching this step, he had already allowed the golden figure to move forward. Through the illusory crimson star, it merged with Little Sun through the secret deed ritual as it dispelled the "evil spirit" hidden inside his body, as well as giving him a certain amount of knowledge and a miraculous spiritual experience.

However, Klein didn't have much confidence at that very moment.

The power of the mysterious space was obviously higher than his spirituality, making him unable to smoothly control the power. As such, the power of the golden figure was mixed, chaotic, and insufficiently coordinated. If he used it as is, the effect was, at most, 10% of what he expected.

As for Amon, who was suspected to be a descendant of the ancient Sun God, he was born into a family of Blasphemers in the Tudor Empire's Fourth Epoch. Even if it wasn't his main body, he was able to successfully hide his identity from the powerful High-Sequence Demon Hunter and the powerful mystical items that protected the existence of the City of Silver. Klein truly didn't have much confidence with the effect only amounting to 10%.

His initial plan was only to give it a try. If it really didn't work, he would temporarily bar The Sun and then reconnect with him when he found a better solution.

However, having come this far, Klein naturally wanted the best outcome and strived to succeed in one go.

Having disguised himself as the godlike Fool, he too had a little pride, and he wanted to keep up his reputation… He gave a self-deprecating laugh as he prepared to find a way to increase the effects of the golden figure to dispel the evil entity at the last moment.

Of course, I can only waste a few seconds; otherwise, the ritual would be over… Klein's eyes swept over the items on the long bronze table again,

thinking only of the words "high level."

Due to his spirituality's intuition as a Seer, his gaze landed on an item.

The Card of Blasphemy, the Dark Emperor card!

Of all the items Klein owned, it was the only one that matched the words "high level!"

As for Azik's copper whistle, Klein clearly remembered that it had been completely suppressed when the Blackthorn Security Company faced off with the spawn of the evil god.

However, what the Dark Emperor card's "high-level" pertains to is the knowledge contained inside. That's not right, after the owner advances to become a High-Sequence Beyonder, it can produce subtle responses with the Beyonder ingredients that are needed. Furthermore, it also possesses the characteristics of anti-divination and anti-prophecy… In other words, its level isn't low… I don't need to use it for a fight; as long as I can use its "high-level" to suppress the power of this mysterious space above the fog, and if I can minimize the chaotic and unnatural coordination of the golden figure, that will be enough!

Klein quickly came up with an idea. He reached out his hand towards the Dark Emperor card which had its back facing up!

Just then, he noticed a frightening scene through the corner of his eyes.

Within the shadow of The Sun that was formed by the illusory rays of the crimson star, a palm, so shriveled that only skin and bones remained, was suddenly reaching forward. Slowly but firmly, it grabbed at the boundary of the crimson star, giving off a feeling as if it was piercing through reality and entering the psyche domain.

Amon was attempting to use the connection to rip open the boundary and extend his hand into the gray fog!

Whoosh!

For the first time, the endless grayish-white fog was in chaos. The "flowing" from before seemed to turn into waves as gales formed.

Klein's pupils shrank. He no longer hesitated, and he picked up the Dark Emperor card.

As soon as he held this item in his hand, he immediately felt that his spirituality was no longer subdued by the power of the mysterious space.

Suddenly, the golden figure became abnormally tall, and on its back, it grew pairs of enormous pitch-black wings. There were a total of twelve pairs!

On each pair of wings, there were dark and bright feathers engraved with many mysterious symbols.

The contrast between gold and black was stark, and the huge figure, driven by Klein, spread its wings to cover the vast dome of the towering palace.

Without a sound, the sacred yet corrupted figure of light and darkness flashed over, overlapping with the manifestation of Little Sun that was formed by the crimson star!

The light and shadows intersected, and a fierce wind blew in all directions. The palm that was so shriveled that it didn't have any flesh, to the point of only having skin and bones left, shrank backward uncontrollably, but it also firmly refused to retreat.

It was like a man falling off a cliff who had extended his hand to grab a bulge, unwilling to let go regardless of what happened.

Whoosh!

In the midst of the illusory and chaotic sounds, light and darkness completely erupted. The shriveled hand finally lost its support, and it

plummeted, constantly disintegrating and disappearing as it did.

After a few seconds, the gray fog and the mysterious space above it returned to its previous tranquility, as if no one had stepped inside for thousands of years.

Klein focused again and saw that the blurry figure of Little Sun was no longer entangled with the twisted and incorporeal entity.

Phew! Unable to stop himself, he heaved a sigh of relief. Then, he conjured the contrasting image from before and threw them at the manifested figure of Little Sun in the crimson rays of light, allowing him to fully comprehend them.

…

In the Berg household in the City of Silver.

Derrick felt both awake and adrift at the same time.

It was as if he could see shadows of ineffable shapes, different colors of light that contained endless knowledge, and a majestic, tall, golden figure looking down upon everything.

This figure stood beside Mr. Fool in the thick gray fog, with twelve pairs of huge, dark, mysterious wings on his back.

Not only did his body and mind become warm and pure, but he also seemed to understand what was called sunlight. He had even figured out Holy Water Creation, as well as the knowledge to exorcise evil spirits.

It also contained images he couldn't understand, such as a towering, hidden pyramidal mausoleum.

In that intoxicating spiritual experience, it was as if he had returned to his most carefree childhood, to the lands where the sun shone in his

imagination, and it was only when everything was gone and the simple furnishings of his room came into view that he snapped back to his senses.

Is this the secret deed ritual as referenced in textbooks? For more than two thousand years, no one in the City of Silver has succeeded before. No one has been able to come into contact with a mighty existence… At that moment, Derrick's low spirits and loneliness lessened. A heartfelt smile beamed on his face.

The Fool's so-called experiment was to confirm whether our City of Silver's environment can perform a secret deed ritual? That wondrous feeling of all that knowledge was the payment "He" gave me? Derrick lowered his head again and said with great respect, "Thank you, Mr. Fool!"

Right at this moment, a grayish-white fog suddenly appeared in front of his eyes. In the center of the fog was a lofty chair. It was the leisurely seated Fool.

Then, Derrick saw himself covered in a transparent, illusory shadow.

The figure wore a black classic robe, a matching pointed hat, and a crystal monocle hung from its face. It coiled around his body like a python!

This… Amon wasn't dead! He evaded the detection of the mystical items and the attention of His Excellency, and he became a parasite on my Spirit Body! Derrick's eyes widened, and he saw himself as he was now, no longer entangled by Amon.

Did Mr. Fool notice him and finish him? Derrick's sunken heart calmed down while cold sweat trickled down his forehead due to the lingering fear. His face, on the other hand, displayed an expression of instinctive reverence.

He subconsciously followed the words described in the mythology course and said, "Praise you, the mighty Mr. Fool!"

…

Somewhere in the deep darkness, a bolt of lightning streaked across the sky, illuminating the surroundings.

This was a plain that was filled with ravines, and a dark-green single-eyed giant was wandering about subconsciously.

His eyes were lifeless, and his face was covered with traces of rotting pus. Grayish-yellow gas permeated from his body and interwoven in the air, forming many clouds.

And beneath his feet, in the darkest ravine on the plain, there was a figure standing at the edge, overlooking the land below.

With the help of the lightning, a thick and broad grayish-white building could be vaguely seen at the bottom of the ravine.

The figure was dressed in a black classic robe and a pointed cap of the same color. It had curly black hair, black eyes, a broad forehead, and thin cheeks. It looked identical to the phantom Derrick Berg had seen.

He raised his hand and pinched the crystal monocle. Then, he turned his head to the left and looked into the distance.

"As expected…” he suddenly whispered, in the language of ancient Feysac.

After pausing for a moment, the man smiled and said the words, "The Fool."

Before he finished speaking, he had already jumped into the ravine in front of him.

At this moment, the lightning subsided for a second, and darkness completely enveloped the world.

…

After eliminating the fatal threat, Klein returned to the real world, once again feeling the urgent need to advance his Sequence.

The Amon that I eliminated wasn't the main body. If he truly is interested in the mysterious space above the gray fog, he will soon return to the City of Silver. At that time, I wonder if the two legendary mystical items and the three Demon Hunters will be able to stop him…

For a mere clone to be so bizarre and terrifying, one can imagine how powerful his main body is… Therefore, I need to conclude the rest of the Magician rules as soon as possible and, through digestion and advancement, better grasp the mysterious space above the gray… Perhaps, the City of Silver's Shepherd elder will be used. If she really is corrupted by the True Creator…

Klein opened the bathroom door and went down to the first floor while in deep thought.

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CHAPTER 364
CATHEDRAL OF SERENITY

What about the rest of the Magician's rules? As Klein idly leafed through the newspaper he had finished reading, he thought about the issues that mattered most to him.

He had already considered one point before, and that was the difference between having an audience to cheer for him and not having one. However, just this alone didn't seem sufficient.

With this thought, Klein's thoughts ran wild as he inexplicably thought of something.

When I was still a Seer, being recognized and praised as a true fortune-teller would give me a feeling that the process of digesting the magic potion had become faster. After I concluded the Seer principles, I began to believe that there was no direct correlation between the views and feedback from others and that they were merely expressions, nothing substantial. If I act well enough, I would naturally be acknowledged, and my digestion would naturally be faster.

That is to say, I had always believed that they were two different responses with the same gains, and not something related to causality.

But now, there's the "choice" of receiving an audience's applause… If it does help me digest the potion, does it mean that some performances really require feedback, and the way that others view me can subtly affect the progress of my potion's digestion?

Hmm, by extension, would the establishment of the Churches by the seven orthodox gods, the spreading of their faith, and the nurturing of their followers partially be a result of this?

…This is truly a sacrilegious thought. I am indeed not a person who sincerely worships gods. I will praise them, but I won't blindly believe in them… Klein quickly adjusted his train of thought as he searched for another angle of attack.

He repeatedly compared the subtle differences between Seer, Clown, and Magician. Gradually, he came up with an idea.

In comparison, does a Magician, who needs to perform, possess the need to take the "initiative?"

Taking the initiative to perform instead of being passive like a Seer or Clown?

From the perspective of fate, it also fits. From a Seer's reverence of fate, a Clown's characteristic of being teased by fate while still maintaining a smile, and finally a Magician who takes the initiative to challenge fate. Even if the result is nothing real or substantial, he will still receive the audience's applause from his deception…

Klein nodded indiscernibly as he planned to make attempts in taking the initiative to perform.

Where should I start? It should be something relatively less dangerous. Uh, I can consider the imprisonment of that vampire named Emlyn White by Father Utravsky…

However, I need to confirm that this group of nonhumans abide by the law and only engage in petty theft at the worst… Where do Emlyn's companions stay on the southern side of the bridge? I can't really remember. I'll have to use divination to jog my memories. Hmm, I'll also confirm how dangerous it is…

Having come to this conclusion, Klein put down the newspaper, got up, and went upstairs.

It had to be said that he didn't have any other motivation to actively involve himself in something that had almost nothing to do with him. It wasn't his personality, but in order to act, he had to force himself to do so.

This is considered rather simple for me. How would a straight male act as a Witch and Demoness of Pleasure? It's no wonder the City of Silver emphasizes that "you're only acting"…Klein suddenly understood the meaning of the admonition.

…

City of Silver, in a dark room at the top of the spire.

Chief of the six-member council, Colin Iliad, stood in front of a window, staring at the silver city which was shrouded in darkness and lightning.

Those beams of light illuminated his disheveled white hair, revealing his twisted and hideous old scars on his face, as well as the deep wrinkles on his face and his worried eyes.

After an unknown period of time, Colin turned and looked at a dark corner. He asked in a deep voice, "Find anything?"

In the corner, a shadow stood up. It was pitch black as it shot towards the wall, twisting and whirling.

Its voice carried the feeling of metal rubbing against metal, and it was rather jarring to the ears.

"After Derrick Berg returned home, he showed some signs of abnormality, but there was no immediate need to deal with it."

Colin nodded slightly and said, "What did he do?"

With the help of the mystical item at the bottom of the spire, the Rampager and the clone of the mysterious figure were eliminated. However, he had constantly suspected that the matter had not been completely resolved.

The former captain of the exploration team suddenly lost control. The mysterious person recklessly took action after enduring for a full forty-two years, without any consideration for the traps or the consequences… All of this made Colin, who had killed and hunted many monsters, instinctively feel that something was amiss.

Therefore, he believed that this was a deliberate choice made by the mysterious man. Although the real purpose of the mysterious man was still unknown, he definitely had some sort of follow-up method, and it wouldn't be so simple to get rid of him.

After using his Demon Hunter powers and finding no abnormalities, he deliberately pretended to be deceived and directly permitted the youth named Derrick Berg to return home. However, he had secretly sent someone to monitor the situation closely.

This was completely different from the detention and observation method which Colin had used in the past. It was a change he had no choice but to make.

The black shadow that was slightly gyrating replied, "After he entered the room, he sat on the edge of the bed and muttered to himself for quite a while. As I was afraid that the mysterious man would discover me, I didn't get too close, so I couldn't clearly hear what was being said. However, I can confirm that this is an abnormal sign.

"After talking to himself, Derrick seemed to become very tired and fell asleep very quickly. But after a shop nap, he suddenly woke up and conducted a ritual. I suspect that his mind wasn't lucid while doing so and that he was controlled by the mysterious man.

"By the way, the ritual had elements of a secret deed."

Colin pondered for a while and said with a solemn expression, "As expected… Perhaps he was communicating with his main body via this method.

"What exactly is his purpose? Why did he spend his forty-two years at the bottom of the spire in peace?"

The black shadow naturally couldn't answer this question as it continued, "After the ritual, Derrick no longer showed any abnormal behavior.

"Does this matter need to be dealt with immediately? If that mysterious person's main body is attracted here, we might not be able to deal with him."

Colin remained silent for a few seconds before saying, "Continue the observation. That mysterious person has yet to show any substantial malice, so our reaction can't be too intense.

"Sigh, do you remember that prophecy? It's almost time for disaster to befall… The further we explore, the more strange ruins we find, and the more dangerous the items we harvest…"

"By your will, Your Excellency." The black shadow slowly retreated back into the ground and disappeared.

At this moment, in the Berg household, Derrick began to cough so violently that his heart seemed to almost burst.

Cough! Cough! Cough!

He crouched down and coughed nonstop until his throat began to itch, and he coughed out something!

Splat! A translucent object slid across his throat and fell to the ground. It was a worm with the length and thickness of a finger!

There were some transparent areas on its body, forming rings.

Derrick had seen something like this at the bottom of the spire previously, and he was certain that he was already free of Amon's influence.

He bent down and picked up the translucent worm, and finally, he was able to count the total number of rings on its body. There were a total of twelve.

What is its use? What can it be used for? It seems to be dead… Derrick lost himself in thought.

…

Winter County in the northern part of the Loen Kingdom.

A black Gothic cathedral towered over the snow-covered mountains as it occupied a vast stretch of land.

In front of it was a cliff, and its surroundings was a vast expanse of whiteness with utmost silence.

This was the Church of the Evernight Goddess's headquarters, known as the Cathedral of Serenity.

The dark-haired, green-eyed Leonard Mitchell had a black windbreaker draped over him as he wore red gloves and walked out of his room.

Having successfully advanced and stabilized himself, he hadn't been given the opportunity to participate in any operations yet, as well as some exercises and so-called mysticism courses.

After going around a corner, Leonard saw a staircase leading down. There, he saw Captain Dunn Smith, with a pair of dark gray eyes and dressed in a black windbreaker, and Klein Moretti, who exuded a bookish demeanor standing there, smiling and waiting.

He tilted his head back and sighed.

My memory has also gotten worse.

I've already forgotten that the two of you no longer exist…

Leonard looked away and walked down the stairs to the first floor of the cathedral. He knocked on the door and entered a small room.

There were chairs in the room, and some Nighthawks wearing red gloves sat around inside.

Leonard found a seat at random and sat down, smiling as he chatted with his friends.

After a while, the high-ranking deacon, Crestet Cesimir, with his propped up collar covering his chin and lips, walked in, sat right in front, and said to the crowd, "Today's class will inform you of things you need to pay attention to.

"As Red Gloves, you will travel to different places, and there's a high chance of encountering dangerous High-Sequence Beyonders.

"If their intent is obvious, and they want to kill you, the only thing you can do is leave a trail behind you so that the subsequent investigators will be able to find the appropriate clues. The exact methods include…

"But most of the time, High-Sequence Beyonders won't always attack you directly. They will utilize you based on all sorts of factors.

"You must be alert enough to not be fooled, and here are a few things that we have summarized.

Sitting in the back, Leonard listened with a smile and great attentiveness. His target for revenge was a High-Sequence Beyonder!

Cesimir paused for two seconds and continued, "In the first case, some High-Sequence Beyonder will pretend to be hidden existences, using promises and hope to deceive you into reciting his corresponding description.

"In the second case, some High-Sequence Beyonders might be restrained in a sealed state. They will act as mystical items that can help you get out of your predicament. For example, a magic lamp that can grant you three wishes or a wishing pond.

"The third case is for a High-Sequence potion named 'Parasite.' They often claim that they have lost their bodies and can only survive together with your Spirit Body. They can only rely on you and will not harm you. They will then give you knowledge, formulas, and all sorts of benefits, hoping that you can become powerful so that you can one day help him reconstruct his body or take revenge.

"In reality, the Beyonders with Parasites will only become nutrients for the Parasite; thus prolonging the Parasite's lifespan and condition."

As Leonard listened, his smile faded.

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CHAPTER 365
VAMPIRE WITH A UNIQUE HOBBY

The Cathedral of Serenity looked particularly beautiful at night. It complemented with the crimson moon high up in the sky that coldly illuminated the land.

Leonard entered his single room, took off his two red gloves, and tossed them onto a wooden table.

With a grim look, he sat in front of the patterned glass window, his back facing out as he bathed in the moonlight.

After ten seconds of silence, he said softly, almost gritting his teeth, "So you're a Parasite!"

Leonard's voice echoed faintly in his own ears, muffled by obvious anger, tension, a sense of loss, and fear.

In the blink of an eye, a slightly aged voice resounded in his mind.

"You can say that."

"What exactly do you want? Are you a being that's leeching my life through your parasitic means? Or are you waiting for me to become stronger, so you can directly devour my Beyonder characteristic, just like cultivating a humanoid potion?" Leonard's voice was suppressed, but in no way slow.

The slightly aged voice in his mind laughed.

"I'm your fortuitous encounter; didn't you always think so? You believe yourself to be unique and the protagonist of this era…

"In fact, you aren't acting as arrogant and self-conceited as you usually do. Ultimately, you're wary of me. Hehe. After I taught you the acting method, you didn't even focus on studying it. All you did was a very superficial attempt at it. You wasted a very long time before you digested it and even hid it. You didn't pursue the Nightmare potion.

"It was only after you met with the spawn of the True Creator and suffered a setback were you willing to advance to Sequence 7. Your regret has made you hallucinate.

"Leonard, think about it carefully. Would I not understand the Church of the Evernight Goddess? When I dealt with them, even the so-called Chanis hadn't even been born yet.

"Would I not know that the Church of the Evernight Goddess knows of Parasites? Would I not realize that the Red Gloves would grasp certain secrets to prevent the infiltration of High-Sequence Beyonders?

"But did I ever stop you from joining the Red Gloves?"

After a few brief changes in expression, Leonard finally fell silent, saying nothing.

The voice in his mind laughed again.

"Do you feel like you have aged faster than your real age? No, right? I can live for at least another hundred years. I'm not in a hurry to take over my host's life.

"As for your Beyonder characteristics, humph. We aren't even in a similar pathway that allows exchanging. If I swallow it, it would be equivalent to drinking poison, making me half-crazy and increasing my chance of losing control. Do you think that I would do that?

"Evernight is grouped with Giant and Death, while my Beyonder pathway's goal is that of the Apprentice and Seer."

Leonard looked at his body which was illuminated by the crimson moonlight. After some thought, he asked again, "What exactly do you want to do? What is your purpose?"

The slightly aged voice in his mind sighed.

"Didn't I already tell you?

"I've suffered tremendous damage, and I need a host to recover slowly, and I have to hide from a terrible enemy… The Nighthawks, the Church of the Evernight Goddess, is quite a good choice for a host."

Leonard lifted his head, looked at the ceiling for a few seconds, and said in a deep voice, "Will you be discovered by the archbishops, high-ranking deacons, or other Sealed Artifacts?"

The slightly aged voice replied leisurely, "If Parasites were so easily discovered, that high-ranking deacon named Cesimir wouldn't have just given a warning and not send all of you to be checked.

"Of course, Parasites do leave traces. The Church of the Evernight Goddess has the means to determine this, but it's relatively complicated and troublesome. It will cause certain losses and substantial danger. It might even affect that Goddess, so before you become a high-ranking deacon, making you qualified to participate in meetings for the upper echelons of the Church, and interact with Grade 0 Sealed Artifacts, there's no need to worry.

"By then, I should've recovered and embarked on my own journey."

Leonard listened with a serious expression. After a while, he said, "You have a terrifying enemy? Who is he?"

The slightly aged voice chuckled and said, "I don't know his name, but I do know his last name…”

"What is it?" Leonard asked.

The slightly aged voice suddenly became low and deep.

"Amon."

…

The area south of the Bridge, 46 Riverbay Avenue.

The owners of the house that were enjoying their dinner heard the tinkling of the doorbell.

The only maid came to the door, and through the peephole above the door's lock, she saw a policeman in a black-and-white checkered uniform.

She opened the door and asked somewhat fearfully, "Sir, is there anything I can do for you?"

The cop was none other than the disguised Klein, who was attempting to take the initiative to perform. He was here to confirm that the partners of the vampire, Emlyn White, the ones living at 48 Riverbay Avenue, and the people who entrusted Stuart with the mission, were law-abiding monsters.

Yes, law-abiding monsters! Although this doesn't sound right and sounds a little funny, it's how I would react with my true thoughts… Klein emphasized in his heart.

The police uniform he wore wasn't a fake that he specially tailored. It was a product of his ordinary clothes and hallucinatory effects.

A Magician had to do what a magician would do!

Klein didn't monitor 48 Riverbay Avenue because he believed that Emlyn White's companions had long since moved away.

As monsters and non-humans, moving to another residence was the most basic thing to do after a comrade disappears for several days!

They had to suspect that Emlyn White was captured by the Nighthawks, the Mandated Punishers, or other official Beyonder organizations, and it was necessary to assume that he might be dead at any moment.

Therefore, what Klein wanted to do was to perform an investigation by conducting a survey.

He maintained the arrogance of a low-ranking policeman towards an ordinary citizen. Without taking off his hat, he slightly raised his chin and said, "I have something to ask your master."

The maid entered in a fluster and quickly brought back a man in his thirties wearing a thick shirt.

"Officer, what would you like to ask me?" the man asked nervously.

Klein stood at the door and looked inside.

"Do you know the residents of Unit 48?"

"I do." The male owner was stunned for a moment before asking, "What happened to them?"

"They're involved in a case. You have to tell me everything you know," Klein said with a straight face.

His face was also disguised, augmented with slight hallucinatory effects. It was to ensure that he looked distinct from the great detective Sherlock Moriarty.

The male owner suddenly came to a realization.

"It's no wonder they moved away so hurriedly more than a month ago… Most of the residents of Riverbay Avenue and the neighborhood knew the Whites and their son. He was a handsome but eccentric young man.

"Mr. White is an excellent physician and is good at using all kinds of medicine and bloodletting therapy."

"Bloodletting therapy?" Klein returned with a question.

"Yes, although this has been regarded by many newspapers and magazines as an old medical skill that had no effect, anyone who received Mr. White's treatment were cured. However, Mr. White also said that except for him, the other doctors who practice bloodletting therapy are quacks." The owner gave his viewpoint.

The bloodletting therapy is to accumulate food for themselves, isn't it? The only thing that is useful was the medicine… This vampire family relied on bloodletting therapy to help treat patients while receiving "food" as compensation. If there weren't many patients, or if their blood was very unhealthy, would they consider going to a distant hospital to steal blood from a blood bag and drink it? For such monsters, they really are law-abiding… Klein nodded in understanding.

The emotional color changes in his Spirit Vision told him that the man wasn't lying.

Seeing that the police officer didn't refute him, the man continued, "Mr. White and his wife are very nice people. Although they can't cure those who are seriously ill, they're still pretty good doctors for all the residents who live nearby…

"Was their child, Emlyn, involved in a case? That young man was too silent, as though he looked down on us. He's always hiding at home, and I have no idea what he's doing… Officer, are you hot? It's so cold outside."

He probably just hides in the day and comes out at night… Klein wiped the sweat off his forehead and said, "I've been walking around here all day because of this case!"

Next, according to his designed survey, he learned everything about the Whites and their son.

One family at a time, he knocked on the door, asked questions, compiled answers, and came to the conclusion that the White family was indeed kind, amiable, and law-abiding.

It doesn't seem like a description of a vampire… Klein looked up at the crimson moon which was piercing through the clouds, ready to make a final confirmation.

He removed the hallucinatory effect from his body and started divining.

After making sure there was no danger, he went around to the side and climbed into the house at 48 Riverbay Avenue.

Others might not know who had taken Emlyn White away, ultimately afraid of being followed up by an official "visit" from official Beyonders, but Klein knew what was going on and wasn't worried about a trap.

As he entered the second floor, he used the moonlight to see that the rooms were in disarray. Many things hadn't been taken away. Through these things, he could imagine the haste in which their owners had left.

He even found some precious books on herbs in a study, including some popular countryside folk recipes.

As he walked, Klein entered one of the bedrooms, and shadows came into view.

He jumped in fright, imagining that he had been ambushed. He almost snapped his fingers to light the match that had been thrown outside.

Fortunately, no attacks occurred.

The crimson moonlight shone through the window, covering the entire room. Klein was finally able to clearly see what those black shadows were.

They didn't have any spiritual luster, and they were figurines of varying sizes!

The biggest one was only slightly shorter than Klein. It was a girl wearing a gorgeous long skirt. Her sleeves and collars were covered with lace and ribbons.

This female figurine was obviously more like one of wax. Her facial features were vivid and lifelike, and her golden hair and red eyes were alluring and beautiful.

The smallest one was only the size of a normal person's palm. It was a woman wearing silver body armor. She looked valiant and heroic while looking magnanimous and beautiful.

As his eyes swept past each figurine, Klein suddenly remembered something.

Under the influence of Roselle, the development of figurine art had two trends: one was the adorable type, allowing them to have a change of clothes; while the other strove to be more realistic.

Klein looked around and couldn't help but exclaim, "These figurines are not cheap!

"Don't tell me Emlyn is a vampire who is obsessed with figurines?"

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CHAPTER 366
THE HANGED MAN'S AMBITION

After a thorough inspection, Klein confirmed that there was nothing odd about the White family and that the couple didn't even leave a single strand of hair behind, apparently to prevent anyone from tracking them down using divination.

He returned to the bedroom filled with dolls, took four steps counterclockwise, and went above the gray fog, intending to use divination to for a final confirmation.

However, before he got down to business, he conjured the female figurine who was nearly his height, and just like how he had done a divination for the Mutated Sun Sacred Emblem in Tingen City, he picked up a dark red fountain pen and wrote a sentence on the yellowish-brown goatskin: "Its origin."

Putting down the pen and holding onto the piece of paper, Klein leaned back in his chair and began to mumble as he slowly adjusted his mental state into a Cogitation state.

After repeating this seven times, his eyes turned dark, and his eyelids drooped as he entered a deep slumber.

In the gray space, he saw the puppet craftsman working with extraordinary concentration. He saw the red-eyed "girl" being placed in the room of dolls and Emlyn White fishing out his wallet with his eyes fixed on her.

Finally, the scene stopped inside the bedroom where Klein was presently located. The proud vampire, Emlyn White, with his hair combed back diagonally, looked handsome but slightly delicate. He sat on the edge of the bed and looked at the doll affectionately, along with all the other puppets of different sizes.

He truly is a fanatic of figurines… Klein opened his eyes and facepalmed.

Soon after, he waved his hand, causing the puppet that he conjured to vanish from the space above the gray fog.

When he was done, he picked up his fountain pen again and wrote another divination statement: "Scenes of death in the last ten years in 48 Riverbay Avenue."

According to the statements from the residents, the White family had been there for no more than ten years, so Klein was able to lock onto a specific area, and he believed that if the White family were just superficially good monsters who were actually making disappearance cases all the time in order to suck warm, delicious blood, then it was impossible to not have any happen at home.

In a period as long as ten years, there would always be a few accidents as long as they didn't stop!

After carefully checking the divination sentence, Klein recited it and entered Cogitation again, rapidly falling into a dream.

In the dusky world, his vision was sometimes pitch-black, sometimes dotted with snowflakes, and sometimes splintered. However, no scenes appeared.

This was the result of the divination: nothing!

No one had died in the last ten years at 48 Riverbay Avenue!

By taking into account all the factors involved, it's possible to make a preliminary conclusion that the White family was a law-abiding vampire family, other than a few instances of petty theft… As Klein looked at the long, mottled bronze table in front of him, he wrapped himself with his spirituality and plummeted into the gray fog.

Returning to the real world, he carefully removed the traces he had left behind and left 48 Riverbay Avenue.

Instead of making his final conclusion, he took a detour to the Riverbay Police Station, where he easily sneaked into the archives by mixing himself in among the thieves and drunkards, allowing them to serve as a foil for his disguise. There, he boldly lit the gas lamps inside.

Then, Klein pulled out the last ten years of missing persons records and paged through them.

From time to time, the police officers on duty would pass by the door, but their eyes didn't notice any light leaking out from the archives.

There's nothing suspicious at all… After an unknown period of time, the black-gloved Klein placed the docket back.

Then, he turned off the gas lamp, took off his hat in the darkness, pressed his hand to his chest, and bowed towards the lobby.

On his way back to Minsk Street, Klein took a shower, changed his clothes, sat down at his desk, and spread out the map of Backlund that he had first bought on the steam locomotive.

The first thing he did was find Rose Street, which was on the south side of the bridge where the Harvest Church was located. This was where Father Utravsky was the bishop of the cathedral and had Emlyn White imprisoned in his basement.

Soon after, Klein's gaze moved as he familiarized himself with the names and layout of the surrounding streets.

A performance can't be done too hastily or with an excessive thirst for success. One has to slowly immerse the audience into the act… Klein whispered, unfolding a piece of paper and lowering his pen.

"Dear Detective Stuart,

"I wonder if you've found Emlyn White? I've been keeping an eye out for you lately, and one of my informants told me today that he has seen this man on Tuteva Street in the area south of the Bridge. Of course, he simply said that the person he saw looked similar to the man in the portrait."

…

Putting down the pen, Klein folded the letter neatly, stuffed it into an envelope, and affixed a black stamp worth one penny.

…

Above the vast, boundless Sonia Sea with undulating waves churning beneath it.

The Blue Avenger advanced forward steadily without any signs of shaking.

Alger Wilson sat in the Captain's cabin with a brass sextant in his hand, but his eyes were closed.

Without a sound, a smile suddenly appeared on his face.

I've finally digested it… Alger opened his eyes and raised his hands, causing the surroundings to glow with an azure light.

The azure lights intersected and turned into a huge wave that swept forward.

Alger pressed his hands together, and the wave disintegrated, turning into countless raindrops that fell onto the deck.

After nearly four months, his Seafarer potion had finally been digested!

During this period of time, not only had he spent a long time wandering the seas, completing all the missions assigned to him by the Church, but he had also deliberately sought out new sea routes and sought out undiscovered islands. After a few setbacks, he was finally met with success.

This, in turn, led to the digestion of the potion, allowing him to figure out his principles as a Seafarer.

The core principle involved being intimate with the sea, to masterfully grasp information regarding sea routes and the weather, as well as exploration and discovery!

The always heavy Alger couldn't help getting out of his seat. He paced back and forth in the Captain's cabin, thinking of the future he longed for.

After obtaining the potion formula for the Wind-blessed and finding the corresponding Beyonder ingredients, he would hide his advancement to Sequence 6 from the Church. Then, he would repeat the same process again, striving to become a Sequence 5 Ocean Songster within three years.

During this process, he had to serve as the captain of the Blue Avenger and avoid entering the Mandated Punishers with its complicated social relationship so as to prevent his secret from being exposed…

Once I'm promoted to Sequence 5 and gain sufficient strength, I'll be able to secretly return to that place… Alger subconsciously looked to his right.

His gaze seemed to pierce through the planks of the ship and the vast sea, and onto an ancient and hidden island.

Alger wasn't worried about his future advancement within the Church. Once he fulfilled his wishes, he would be able to fully focus on seeking a higher position in the Church!

At that time, he would continue to disguise himself as a Sequence 7 despite being a Sequence 5 and drink another Wind-blessed potion!

This would increase his Beyonder characteristics, strengthen him, and slow his digestion, but it wouldn't endanger his own safety.

For the same reason, after Sequence 5 was completely digested, he could imbibe another Ocean Songster and repeat the normal process. This would only push him closer to losing control, but he also had solutions to that.

It was to find a woman to marry and transfer the extra Beyonder characteristics to his children.

After doing this, I'll be able to move closer to the level of a Cardinal and approach the level of a High-Sequence Beyonder! This is my chance in such an era! In his mind, Alger had already sketched out the image of himself wearing the robe of a Cardinal as he occupied a high position in the Church and had many Mandated Punishers under his control.

After being intoxicated for a moment, he withdrew his gaze and regained his senses.

…What follows will increase in difficulty with each step. Fortunately, I have the Tarot Gathering and Mr. Fool. Although there are dangers underlying it as well, any path to improving myself will involve risk!

I have to try to gather those Roselle diary pages as quickly as possible. I should grab the chance to raise a question and understand what that card beside Mr. Fool's hand is—the one which only shows its back.

It wasn't there previously.

Card… Roselle's diary… Could it be the item I'm thinking of?

Alger's eyes narrowed as his pupils constricted.

…

15 Minsk Street. Klein yawned, switched off the gas lamp, and slipped into bed.

He originally had another plan. He had wanted to use divination to grasp the origin of the Biological Poison Bottle and obtain the first three potion formulas for the Sequence from the Werewolf Beyonder characteristic.

But after a busy night dealing with the matter regarding Emlyn White, he felt a little tired and decided to try again the next day above the gray fog.

Just as he lay down and closed his eyes, Klein suddenly felt that something was wrong.

This was the spiritual intuition of a Seer!

It has already been several days since I obtained the Werewolf Beyonder characteristics and the Biological Poison Bottle. It's not like I haven't been in a good mental state during this period of time; yet, I have been repeatedly delaying the divination. This is very abnormal! Klein sat up, carefully thought about it, and recalled a similar incident.

The first time he met Megose, he had wanted to directly use his Spirit Vision to observe her mental state, but he naturally ended up missing the opportunity due to momentarily being taken aback. It was only at the end that he found out that it was because Megose had an evil god's spawn in her stomach. His spiritual intuition as a Seer had stopped him without leaving a mark, preventing him from losing control and collapsing right on the spot.

It's very similar, and this time, it's even more obvious… I remember that Miss Sharron mentioned that the Rose School of Thought's control over

their members far exceeds my imagination. Everyone's body and soul seem to be bound by something, which is also the reason why information regarding the Mutant Sequence is rarely leaked out… They believe in the Chained God… So, when using the Beyonder characteristic of a Werewolf to deduce the corresponding potion formulas, it would directly involve this evil god and bring about consequences that I don't wish to bear? Klein thought about it seriously and felt that there was something suspicious about it.

Back when I divined the Mutated Sun Sacred Emblem and the "ear" left behind by the Listener, my spiritual intuition hadn't stopped me… Could it be that the Chained God is stronger than the Eternal Blazing Sun and the True Creator?

Or could it be that "His" nature allows him to restrain the gray fog and even be able to effectively invade it?

Of course, the source of the danger can also be the Biological Poison Bottle…

Thinking of this, Klein, who was always cautious, decided to attempt divining the Biological Poison Bottle tomorrow and see if his Seer's spiritual intuition would stop him.

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CHAPTER 367
THREATENING LETTER

Tuesday morning, the weather remained as cold as it usually was this season.

Klein tightened the collar of his tweed coat, put on his hat, and pulled open the door.

He was heading to the end of the street, where the mailbox was, to post a letter to Detective Stuart. Since it wasn't that far, there was no need to dress neatly or heavily, but Klein had just recovered from his cold, so he had wrapped himself up thickly just in case.

Perhaps it was because of the strong wind last night, but the air in Backlund was surprisingly good. Klein subconsciously slowed down his pace and enjoyed this rare morning.

As he passed Jurgen's house, he heard the oriel window creak open and instinctively turned to look.

Standing at the window was Mrs. Doris, wearing a black plush hat and a thick grayish-blue scarf. She looked even worse than before, and her body was even more hunched.

"Good morning, Detective Moriarty. Thank you for taking care of Brody. He said you were a good man, didn't you, Brody?" Old Granny Doris bent down and picked up the black cat with green eyes.

Brody used all four of his limbs and struggled in her embrace. Finally, he jumped down and lightly landed on the windowsill.

But instead of leaving, he circled around and around, nuzzling Mrs. Doris with its head on one side, without even looking at Klein.

Was he being friend-zoned by a cat? Klein gave a self-deprecating laugh and smiled sincerely.

"It's a happy deed, and even more delightful news is that you've recovered and have been discharged from the hospital."

After exchanging a few pleasantries, he said goodbye and continued to walk down the street with a smile on his face.

He had only taken a few steps when he heard Mrs. Doris call after him.

"When Jurgen comes back, I'll have him pay you!"

…Do I look like I took this mission for the money? The smile on Klein's face suddenly froze. He could only half turn around and wave his hand, indicating that he understood.

When he was far away from Jurgen's house, his expression gradually turned serious, and he sighed faintly.

He had just activated his Spirit Vision to look at Mrs. Doris's aura and found that her situation wasn't too good. It wasn't only because of her old age but also because of the cold weather and bad air in Backlund. All of these had a very bad effect on her lung disease.

Mrs. Doris should be able to make it through this late autumn and winter, but it will be hard to say for the next one, or the next, next one… If she wants to live for a few more years, she would have to move to the south, to the area around Desi Bay… It's a pity that it's likely that Lawyer Jurgen can't afford to do so now… Even I haven't been to Desi Bay… Klein mumbled, came to the mailbox, and stuffed the letter in.

This was the prelude to his performance.

And this evening, he would head to the Harvest Church as a detective and do the rest of the preparations.

After buying a Desi pie for breakfast, Klein returned via his original path and was quite at ease.

Before he got close to the house, he saw an elegantly-decorated carriage parked outside. Two ladies in black hats and a ribbon were anxiously pulling on his doorbell, while the maids and bodyguards were scattered around, as though they were on guard against something.

Mrs. Stelyn… Ma'am Mary… Do they have something to entrust me with? They look very anxious… With the paper bag containing the Desi pie in hand, Klein approached and said with a laugh, "Ladies, it should be time for breakfast."

When they turned back to see Detective Sherlock Moriarty, Ma'am Mary was visibly relieved.

"Mister Detective, you have to help me."

In Klein's Spirit Vision, there was nothing fake about her anxiety, nervousness, and fear. Therefore, he nodded his head, pointed at the door and said, "Let's talk inside."

As he spoke, he glanced at his landlady, Stelyn, and he noticed that her condition was entirely different from the past two days. She had become very low and dejected, as though she wasn't interested in anything at all.

What happened to her? Although his landlady liked to show off a little, she's someone who loves life a lot… Klein took out his key and opened the door.

After entering, before she could sit still, Ma'am Mary impatiently said, "Detective Moriarty, I received a threatening letter!"

Threatening letter? Klein put down the Desi pie, clasped his hands and asked, "What does the letter say?"

Ma'am Mary glanced sideways at Mrs. Stelyn, and seeing that she wasn't quite as active as usual, she said after some deliberation, "That letter asked me to handle the smoke of the factory impartially when I carry out the atmospheric pollution investigation and to acknowledge their contributions, or else I would end up like the doll that came with the letter…

"The doll's head was ripped off, and its arms and legs were broken."

Ma'am Mary seemed to recall the feeling when she opened the letter, and she said with a trembling voice, "This is the first time I've encountered something like this. I don't know if it will become a reality or not. I didn't know that I would have to experience such cases when I became a member of the investigation council. I didn't know…"

Ma'am, perhaps Emperor Roselle once said that there are only two ultimate forms of hatred between people. One is to murder the other person's parents, and the other is to destroy another person's means of earning money… Klein solemnly nodded his head and said, "My suggestion is to report it to the police."

From his point of view, Ma'am Mary was now a member of the National Atmospheric Pollution Council. Her status was completely different from before, and the police would certainly not take the threats she received lightly.

Moreover, this involved important the development of a governmental policy and wasn't an ordinary matter, so there was a high probability that the police department would hand the case over to the Church's Beyonder organization in order to solve this case as soon as possible.

Based on Ma'am Mary's status as a follower of the Goddess, the Nighthawks was an inevitable choice.

This way, even if Klein wanted a share of the reward, he didn't want to involve himself in it.

"I've already done so, but it doesn't reassure me." Ma'am Mary pursed her lips and said, "Do you know what they said? They said that threatening letters were formed by cutting the words from newspapers, and the doll could be bought from anywhere. It would be very difficult to find the sender in a short period of time! And they only sent one policeman to protect me! Goddess, is this how they treat a helpless citizen's cry for help?"

Ma'am Mary paused, looked earnestly at Klein and said, "Detective Moriarty, I believe you can help me, not only because of your performance from that matter but also because of Mike's approval, Aaron's praise, and Talim's extolment. And I know you made a great contribution in that serial murder case. Don't worry, I will pay you well enough."

Your words make me happy, but something doesn't seem right…

Unless the police have already been bribed, they would probably transfer the case to the Nighthawks, and with Beyonder means such as divination available, it would be impossible for a letter made up of words from a newspaper to avoid detection. The sender would have either been caught already, or they would have means to interfere with divination… The latter would only lead to a formal and large-scale intervention by the Nighthawks…

No matter what the situation is, it will be different from how the situation is handled now…

Klein didn't answer Ma'am Mary right away, but he carefully analyzed the abnormality of this matter.

The living room suddenly became unusually quiet. The feeling of silence made Ma'am Mary and Mrs. Stelyn somewhat uneasy for some unknown reason.

At some point in time, Klein had fished out a coin and made it bounce and roll between his fingers, as though it were a habit of his to focus his thoughts.

Suddenly, the coin flew up and then fell down steadily onto the palm of his hand, its back facing up.

Klein was surprised. He was divining whether this matter involved danger, but it turned out to have none.

If such a threat really exists, even if the sender doesn't have considerable abilities, it would still result in a certain degree of danger. It's impossible to have none… Is it just a simple threat? Or… Klein suddenly thought of another possibility as he smiled and said, "Ma'am Mary, don't worry. You can go back home in peace. If someone comes to you in the next two days to discuss this issue so as to make it public, allowing the citizens to know the true intentions of those factory owners in order to incite anger among the public, then you will be fine."

The possibility which Klein had just thought of was that the threat was a trap set up by the council so as to incite the public to use their anger, allowing the atmospheric pollution investigation to be carried out smoothly and lead to the subsequent bill which could benefit them.

This would explain why the police are responding in this manner.

“…Why do you say that?" Ma'am Mary asked, frowning.

Klein smiled and replied, "That's what I've deduced."

"And if what you claim doesn't happen in two days?" Ma'am Mary pressed.

Klein said sincerely, "Then I will provide protection."

In any case, there's no danger… he added inwardly.

After comforting and sending off Ma'am Mary, he went above the gray fog to confirm the matter and received the same result as before.

By then, his Desi pie had turned cold…

…

Ma'am Mary returned home with some apprehension and uneasiness, wondering if she should invite Stelyn to stay with her for a few days.

At that moment, her housekeeper informed her that the eldest son of Count Hall, the chief secretary of the National Atmospheric Pollution Council, Mr. Hibbert Hall, had come.

After both of them entered the living room, before Ma'am Mary could even open her mouth to speak, the handsome, blond gentleman spoke first.

"Ma'am Mary, I've heard of what has happened to you. It's a disgrace to Backlund, and even to the whole kingdom, and I'm deeply sorry for it.

"Don't worry, everyone in the committee will stand with you!"

"Thank you for your concern," Ma'am Mary responded gratefully.

After a moment of consideration, Hibbert Hall said, "Ma'am, I wish to get a reporter to interview you regarding this incident. I want to tell everyone about what happened to you and how despicable this act is. I want to let everyone see how outrageous those people who have contaminated Backlund's air are! There's no sign of repentance!

"Please agree to my request."

This… It's exactly as Detective Moriarty described… Ma'am Mary was momentarily at a loss for words.

…

After breakfast, Klein rested for a while. Since he had nothing better to do, he went above the gray fog in preparation to divine the origin of the Biological Poison Bottle.

This time, he didn't delay it at all.

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CHAPTER 368
TAKING HIM BY SURPRISE

The stone pillars of the ancient and majestic palace supported the high dome.

Klein sat at the end of the long bronze table, holding a translucent brown bottle. He checked it over and over again, but he didn't sense any danger from it.

Let's begin… He conjured a pen and paper and wrote the divination statement: "Its origin."

Putting the fountain pen away and bracing himself for a blow, Klein glanced at the paper and the Biological Poison Bottle, leaned back in his chair, and entered Cogitation while reciting the statement.

Soon, he entered a hazy gray dream world and saw a dark but spacious room.

There were king cobras, black widows, and other strange plants and animals in the room. It was a messy and harrowing scene.

A middle-aged man in a white coat was standing in front of a long table in the middle of the room. He threw the snake gall and spider venom into the huge black pot that hung from the ceiling.

In the end, he even put in a few items that possessed a strong spiritual luster. For example, they would sometimes disperse into a black gas, and other times condense into dark green lung-shaped objects. Otherwise, they

would be in the form of a tube containing a clear azure liquid or fiery red eyes…

The air around the black iron pot gradually became viscous. It was gathering towards the center, but it was constantly being pushed aside, making it difficult to achieve its goal.

When the white-robed middle-aged man saw this scene, his brow slowly creased, his expression looked slightly anxious.

He flipped through the black notebook by his side, gritted his teeth, and used a ritual silver dagger to slice open his wrist.

Drops of fresh blood dripped into the black iron pot, seemingly breathing life into its contents instantly. A terrifying suction force suddenly erupted, sucking in all the viscous air around it. The scarlet blood which had yet to leave his wrist was fully sucked into it.

And that wasn't everything. Regardless of how the white-robed middle-aged man struggled to resist, or how he revealed a terrified expression, he couldn't prevent his body from approaching the iron pot.

His body was stretched, his head was compressed, and amidst his screams, he was eaten, little by little, by the pot.

The hanging specimens, plants, and anything that could move or be moved, all flew into the pot.

Brown fog suddenly filled the room, quietly ebbing and flowing.

By the time it was all over, the room was empty except for the brown, translucent bottle lying quietly in the middle of the clearing.

…

The scene quickly faded away, and the dream world shattered. Klein opened his eyes and muttered to himself, *So the Biological Poison Bottle is a product of a death-seeking experiment.*

I thought it was a Beyonder characteristic left behind by some Beyonder… If that were the case, I'd have been able to divine a formula…

To Klein, a Rampager's spirituality and Beyonder characteristic, as well as a spirituality and Beyonder characteristic which was contaminated by an evil god, could all be used to divine a formula. Just like the All-Black Eye which Nimblewright Master Rosago left behind. It was thanks to the isolation effects of the gray fog, and how the mysterious space was able to eliminate negative influences, giving him the ability to court death. Of course, a Beyonder characteristic involved many other additional factors. In theory, the chances of failure were extremely high, but Klein only had the confidence to do so after advancing to Magician.

Similarly, a Sealed Artifact formed by Beyonder characteristics could also be used to divine the formula for a potion.

However, if they were mainly ingredients, then through the production processes and dangerous experiments done by an artisan or other Beyonders, turning them into mystical items, then Klein's divination would be useless at his current state. Even with the enhancement effect provided by the mysterious space above the gray fog, it was useless.

Not bad. At least I don't have to worry about the Biological Poison Bottle having any other latent risks anymore… Klein glanced at the Werewolf fang and wisely abandoned his curiosity.

…

In Empress Borough, the opulent villa of Count Hall.

Audrey continued her study of psychology.

By her feet, the huge golden retriever, Susie, was sitting there, her eyes shining. From time to time, she wagged her tail, as if enjoying the scene.

Psychiatrist Escalante finished the introduction material and deliberately made a casual remark.

"Actually, there is such a theory.

"It's believed that humans would inherit a certain amount of their ancestor's consciousness over the generations; thus, forming the underlying logic of one's behavior patterns. For example, although many people have never seen a poisonous snake, they would instinctively feel afraid and wish to avoid it once they encounter one.

"Why is that? This is theorized to be an instinct that we inherited from our ancestors, something that is hidden in the deepest recesses of our consciousness. In ancient times, people constantly fought with poisonous snakes and all kinds of ferocious animals, and they gradually carved this memory into their consciousness and passed it down."

"How does it get passed down?" Audrey asked with interest.

Escalante, with her long hair which reached her waist, laughed.

"That's a very good question.

"Some people provide explanations that involve a theory that everyone's consciousness is actually connected at the lowest level. It is one entity, and the traces and characteristics left behind on this entity will affect the consciousness that belongs solely to them.

"For example, the lowest level of consciousness is like an endless ocean. Our unique consciousness would be the islands situated in the ocean and can be split into two parts. One is hidden under the water, which is the subconscious which is higher in both quantity and size; the other is exposed

on the surface of the ocean, the superficial consciousness that can usually be detected.

"This is the axiom of this school of thought in psychology."

Audrey glanced at Susie, stroked the golden fur on its neck and said, "So, we can use this connected ocean to influence the consciousness of others and achieve the goal of curing certain mental illnesses?"

This is the mysticism foundation and Beyonder powers of a Psychiatrist? But it doesn't seem enough and is lacking something. For example, the sky above one's head, the sky which shrouds everything? Audrey curiously thought as she wore a look of confused enlightenment.

"You're really talented in this area!" Escalante praised in delight. "However, we can only affect a portion of the surrounding ocean, and through it, we can affect those who are close to us. If we venture deeper into the ocean, it will be easy for us to lose ourselves."

She looked up at the ornate and complicated clock on the wall, smiled, and said, "Time's up, this is the end of today's class. Miss Audrey, if you're interested in this psychological school of thought, then we can continue talking about it next time."

"Alright." Audrey stood up and bowed.

Watching Escalante leave, she nodded in thought.

Ma'am Escalante doesn't seem like a real Psychiatrist. At most, she's like me, a Telepathist…

Was what she just talked about the axioms of the Psychology Alchemists?

They really are patient. Why aren't they trying to recruit me yet…

As Audrey was in thought, Susie commented happily from the side, "Audrey, I feel like she's the same type of person as us. No, I mean the same type of dog. No, that's not right… Woof!"

Susie, who only had a rudimentary grasp of the human language, fell into a state of confusion, unable to find the right words to describe her feelings.

…

South of the Bridge, Rose Street, outside the Harvest Church.

Klein, in his normal disguise, looked up at the Sacred Emblem of Life on the facade, held his cane, climbed the steps, and stepped through the main door.

The first thing he had to do was to confirm the situation.

Only by doing this could he perform better so as to ingeniously rescue the vampire, Emlyn White, without garnering suspicion. Then, as a detective who had provided clues, he could receive the gratitude from the White family and gain the applause of an audience.

It was bound to be an interesting performance.

The Harvest Church wasn't big, as it only had a prayer hall. Klein found a spot by the aisle and looked ahead as he took off his hat.

Bishop Utravsky was preaching. His height of more than 2.2 meters, and his burly physique, which couldn't be concealed by his loose priest robes, gave off an extreme sense of oppression.

However, his expression was one of extreme gentleness, filled with appreciation and gratitude towards life.

In front of such a "priest," no one dared to cause a ruckus. The few believers quietly listened, occasionally making prayer gestures unique to

the Church of Mother Earth.

Klein watched carefully, waiting patiently, neither conceited nor rash.

As the sermon ended, he gripped his cane and prepared to get up to proceed with his subsequent plans.

At this moment, a man wearing the priest robes of the Church of Mother Earth entered from the door that led to the room at the back of the cathedral.

He looked twenty-eight or twenty-nine-years-old, had black hair and red eyes, possessing a high nose and thin lips. He was handsome but didn't give off masculine vibes. He was none other than Emlyn White.

Klein's mouth gaped a little and nearly failed to close it.

Isn't this guy supposed to be locked up in the basement?

Wasn't he shouting about how determined he was, that he would absolutely not submit to Bishop Utravsky's will?

Emlyn White distributed the communion to one believer after another, and he finally stopped in front of Klein.

Klein's mind whirred, and he immediately in a low voice, "Are you Emlyn White? Your parents entrusted my friend to look for you.

"Why are you here? Did you encounter something? Are you in need of assistance?"

Emlyn White didn't seem to have his unique pride and said with a smile that only looked slightly better than crying, "There's no need; I will be returning home soon."

He pursed his lips, shook his head, and forced a smile, saying, "I am already a believer of Mother Earth, no—a priest."

This answer was completely out of Klein's expectations. For a moment, he didn't know how to respond, and he could only shout repeatedly in his mind: *Hey, you were very adamant about your worship of the moon the last time we interacted at the Harvest Church. You said that you would absolutely not convert to believing in Mother Earth. How long has it been, and you have already given in?*

Isn't that way too fast?

What about your persistence? Where's your moral integrity?

My carefully prepared performance has been forced to end before it has even begun.

Th-this is just taking me by surprise!

Klein opened his mouth and suddenly realized something amiss.

Why is Emlyn White informing me of his conversion?

I'm just a detective who accidentally chanced upon him while passing by…

Does he wish for me to pass this message to his parents?

Is there another meaning behind this?

While Klein was guessing, Emlyn White put away his worried and smiled smugly.

"You don't have to act, Mister Detective.

"Or should I call you the new owner of the Master Key?

"Hehe, to a noble Sanguine, everyone has a different smell and has different blood characteristics. Even when I was locked up in the basement, I could smell it. I remember your smell."

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CHAPTER 369
INCEPTION

I've been recognized!

Klein instantly fell into shock as he nearly entered combat mode.

Even if he didn't use his Spirit Vision, he could tell from Emlyn White's tone and words that he wasn't lying. He was very confident and certain.

Just as the tense feelings rose in him, Klein suddenly thought of something.

Why should I worry about that?

Then, he answered his own question in his mind, *So what if I was recognized? The current situation is different from what it was two months ago!*

I was left flustered by the incident with Ambassador Bakerland in front of the official Beyonders. I was rushing around, trying to grasp at every possible straw. In the process, I ended up making contact with Beyonder circles, and even the possibility of me becoming a Beyonder was quite plausible. Therefore, even if my identity as a Beyonder was exposed, they wouldn't think too deeply about it and dig up my past.

And it's very likely that Detective Isengard Stanton is a Beyonder, and he maintains good relations with the police and the official Beyonder organizations. He had speculated that I was the same as him and tried to gently rope me in. In this regard, I can barely be counted as a borderline member of the official Beyonders, and if anything were to happen, I wouldn't necessarily be imprisoned.

More importantly, I have already made my current image so deeply ingrained that I don't have to worry about any wanted posters. If anything goes wrong, then I can just abandon 15 Minsk Street and my identity as Sherlock Moriarty!

So, what's there to worry about?

Yes, before I came here, I had also performed a divination, and the revelation was that there was almost no danger.

As these thoughts flashed across his mind, Klein's contracted pupils, slightly appalled expression, and his fight or flight state eased, as if he was discussing the day's weather with Emlyn White.

Seeing his calm expression, Emlyn White raised his eyebrows, took a few steps to the side, and squeezed past him before slowly sitting to his side.

The vampire looked at Bishop Utravsky, who was leading the believers in the rite of Holy Communion, and he said with a sneer, "Mister Detective, aren't you afraid that I'll go to the police station and shout out loud that you're a Beyonder?"

Similarly, Klein looked forward and said without turning his head, "I'll go with you and shout out loud that there's a vampire!"

Come on, let's have an internecine outcome! Do you think I'm afraid of you!?

Emlyn White's expression stiffened, he raised his right index finger and said, "Sanguine, a noble Sanguine! Got it?"

Before Klein could speak, seeing that Bishop Utravsky was preoccupied with the rites of Holy Communion, Emlyn White chuckled and said, "Regardless, I'm finally going to be free.

"I pretended to submit and told the old man that I was willing to convert to believing in Mother Earth and was deeply penitent for what I had done. Although I have no idea what was necessary to show repentance, it's not a problem to put on an act.

"That old man actually believed me like this, and he was very happy as well. He let me out on the spot, and he let me become a priest here. He told me that as long as I memorized the Holy Bible of the Church of Mother Earth, he would allow me to return home.

"Haha, that old fogey, who's all brawn and has become silly from his faith, sure is easy to fool!"

Easy to fool? Klein turned his head to look at the vampire, looking smug he looked forward and said, "Father Utravsky used to be a pirate, he probably killed far more people than the number of people your father has ever saved. Furthermore, most pirates don't trust their fellow crew members. Betrayal and trickery are common among them. To be a relatively successful pirate able to live to the end, Father Utravsky wouldn't be a person who's easily fooled, even if he's not a bright person."

Emlyn White wore a look of disbelief as he wished to retort. Klein rubbed the top of his cane and leisurely added, "Father has a powerful Sealed Artifact in his possession; it is known as the Mental Terror Candle. It can allow the wielder to enter the deepest recesses of the target's soul. There, no one can lie.

"Moreover, this is only one of its uses. I don't know if it has any other abilities."

Emlyn gradually froze, his eyes losing focus.

After a dozen seconds, he whispered with a pale expression, "When I said I was willing to change my faith, that old man came in with a lantern. There was a candle in the lantern, and I didn't get a good look at it…”

Klein tilted his head and gave Emlyn White a sympathetic glance.

"Perhaps Father Utravsky used it to plant a seed in you, one that gradually and thoroughly makes you wholeheartedly believe in Mother Earth."

The corner of Emlyn's mouth twitched, revealing a smile comparable to a zombie's.

"I don't feel anything at all. It shouldn't be anything like you said.

"Besides, aren't my parents coming? They can blame the priest through ordinary people, saying that he forcefully detained me, forcing him to make a choice between sullying the Church of Mother Earth's reputation and letting me go.

"Isn't that a great idea?"

Klein maintained his look of pity, clasped his hands, and raised them to his nose, acting truly penitent.

"If I were Father Utravsky, I would choose to call the police and have them determine the truth.

"Tell me, who do you think will suffer in the end, the bishop who has the right to preach or a vampire?"

“…Sanguine, Sanguine!" Emlyn White's facial muscles seemed to twitch.

He clenched his fist and punched the back of the pew in front of him.

"I can wait. Once I memorize the Holy Bible, I will ask the old man to let me return! He is a truly devout person and will not break his promise!"

Klein didn't turn his head and said with a smile, "I've been to 48 Riverbay Avenue. Your parents have already moved away."

"Naturally. Not only will they move away, they will also move to somewhere I'm not aware of," Emlyn White responded without hesitation.

Klein added with a relatively relaxed tone, "They moved in a hurry. They left a lot of things behind, such as the things in your room."

Emlyn White's expression suddenly became extremely wonderful. He gaped his mouth, abruptly stood up, squeezed past Klein, and rushed towards Bishop Utravsky who stood in front of the Sacred Emblem of Life.

"Father, Bishop, I want to return home, I want to return home, I want to return home!" Emlyn shouted.

Seeing that there were still believers who hadn't finished their Holy Communion yet, Father Utravsky didn't respond. He merely gave the pitiful vampire a calm look.

Emlyn quickly shut his mouth and became quiet.

He paced back and forth, looking extremely anxious.

Smiling, Klein stood up, took his cane and hat, and strolled down the aisle to the front pew of the cathedral's hall.

When Holy Communion was over, he walked up to Father Utravsky and said with a serious expression, "Bishop, I don't know why you're retaining Emlyn here, nor do I want to know. I only know one thing—his parents have entrusted me to take him back."

If this giant-like priest agrees to my request so easily, I can only light a vigil candle for this vampire, Emlyn. No—I'm sure he will hate candles from this day forth. It's best to mourn for him… Klein secretly thought.

Father Utravsky looked down at them and replied gently, "Emlyn can return home at any time."

"…”

Klein gave Emlyn White a glance, raised his right hand, and tapped his chest.

He wanted to gesture the sign of the crimson moon by tapping in a clockwise fashion, but in the end, he forced himself to draw the triangular Sacred Emblem.

Emlyn became rather anxious from the look Klein gave him. Without a word, he rushed to the door of the cathedral and left without a hitch.

Klein followed him at a moderate pace without any signs of anxiety.

After proceeding forward in what appeared like a jog, Emlyn suddenly slowed down and said in a daze, "I feel like I'm starting to miss the Harvest Church, the feeling of memorizing the Holy Bible, and the Sacred Emblem of Life. I wish to return to clean and tidy the place. It'll only take an hour, an hour…”

This planted seed is even more "vicious" than I had imagined. No matter where this vampire goes, he will return to the Harvest Church every day and work for an hour? That's actually quite alright. At the very least, the seed, which was planted, didn't change Emlyn's faith. In a way, he's showing him some respect, but why did I use the word 'respect'…That candle is called Mental Terror Candle, and it's said to be from a dragon. The Spectator pathway is rather scary… Klein tapped his cane and said, "Do you need me to remind you of anything?"

"There's no need!" Emlyn's expression distorted as he angrily said, "I will fight this feeling! I'm going to move to Midseashire or Feysac. I don't believe that I'd still wish to return when I've left Backlund!"

He gritted his teeth and suddenly exhaled.

"Let's take the carriage back to Riverbay Avenue."

"Alright," Klein responded nonchalantly.

After a few steps, Emlyn stopped a rental carriage.

Just as he was about to board the carriage, his back stiffened for two seconds. Then, he said so quietly that Klein could barely hear him, "I don't have any money on me."

"I do." Klein smiled.

Emlyn stopped talking and got onto the carriage. Klein sat across him, and as the carriage began to move off, he asked, as if in thought, "Your father is a doctor? One that possesses outstanding skills in drugs and medicine?"

Although he was listless, Emlyn raised his chin out of habit.

"This is the gift that we Sanguine enjoy. The most outstanding potion masters are all from the Sanguine!"

"Is that so…" Klein whispered to himself; his thoughts a mystery.

Emlyn said after a moment of silence, "Write to your friend and tell him that I have returned to Riverbay Avenue. My parents will come looking for me."

"Alright," Klein answered simply.

After nearly twenty minutes, the carriage pulled into Riverbay Avenue and stopped in front of Unit 48.

After paying the fare, Klein got out of the carriage and saw Emlyn White look towards the bedroom, his expression becoming abnormally excited.

Restraining himself, the vampire pressed his hand to his chest and bowed deeply at Klein.

"In any case, I must thank you."

Klein immediately revealed a smile.

"There's no need to thank me.

"The bounty reward of finding you and the transportation fees will be obtained from your parents.

"Also, you have to concoct a medicine with Beyonder effects to help me treat a patient.

"This is the reward that your family should pay."

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CHAPTER 370
THE AUDIENCE'S APPLAUSE

Bounty reward, transportation fees, and medicine with Beyonder effects… Emlyn White was left momentarily dazed when he first heard that.

This was not the answer that he had expected.

What about your gentlemanliness? the vampire thought in shock.

As a detective, abiding by clear accounting principles is necessary. Besides, you've even delayed my visit to the Quelaag Club. I don't know what food they've offered in limited supply for the past two days… Klein looked at Emlyn White as he joked and lampooned silently.

After a few seconds, Emlyn forced a smile and said, "I have to see the patient before I can concoct the appropriate medicine."

From your tone, you sound really confident… Klein nodded thoughtfully.

He then thought of a problem.

The White family seems to be a family of outstanding potion scholars. If I were to really be injured and poisoned, then I can come to them for treatment… Wouldn't all of my efforts of going out of my way to get the Apothecary formula from Father Utravsky be for naught? I no longer need to nurture another aide that's good at healing… Reality sure does change faster than a plan…

However, it's not really a waste either. I've already made back my investment from Miss Magician. For things like formulas, as long as it

exists, it will always be valuable…

Besides, the White family will definitely stay away from Riverbay Avenue and live their lives with new secret identities. I might not be able to find them, so it's not that convenient…

No, before the Mental Terror Candle's inducing thoughts are resolved, all I need to do is wait for Emlyn White at the Harvest Church…

With this in mind, Klein took off his hat, bowed and said, "No problem, I will take you there when the time comes.

"I shall not waste your time any further. Cheerio."

Emlyn White's expression changed as he hesitantly said, "If you can remove the effect of the Mental Terror Candle, then you will receive a greater bounty, and…" He paused and raised his chin. "…and the friendship of the Sanguine."

I'm a Magician, and I possess the Sun Brooch and Biological Poison Bottle. I'm only limited to mediumship when it comes to the aspect of one's psyche, so what can I do? Amongst the people I know, only Miss Justice is a close match, but she's only a Sequence 8 Telepathist… Unless you change your faith to "The Fool that doesn't belong to this era," then we would will be able to find out how to use the knowledge recorded in the Book of Secrets to help you solve this problem through a corresponding ritual… Speaking of which, vampires seemed to be worshipers of the primitive moon, very similar to the Shaman King and the like… Could the ancient god recorded in the City of Silver—the Vampire Ancestor, Lilith—be the primitive moon?

Klein said with a smile as his thoughts wandered, "I'll keep a lookout for ways to help you."

Emlyn White nodded and didn't say anything else. He impatiently turned around and rushed to the door.

If it wasn't for the fact that the carriage driver was still nearby, he would've spread his black bat wings and soared directly to the second floor.

Klein laughed and shook his head emotively.

He rode back in the same rental carriage and arrived at the steam metro not far away. He then made a transfer and returned to Cherwood Borough's 15 Minsk Street.

Before entering the room, Klein, who had become accustomed to opening the letterbox, checked for letters.

To his surprise, there really was a letter.

There was no stamp on the letter. It was addressed to Detective Sherlock Moriarty and was signed off with "Jurgen Cooper."

Lawyer Jurgen? Puzzled, Klein picked up the envelope and tore it open.

Under the light of the street lamp, he saw a piece of paper and two bills.

The denominations of these two notes were one soli and five soli.

A total of six soli… I fed the cat three times during the period… The agreement was two soli per instance… Realizing the reason, Klein opened the door and lit the gas lamp.

As he unfolded the letter, he discovered that it didn't contain much, and the words that Jurgen had handwritten were as precise and serious as he was.

"Dear Detective Moriarty,

"Thank you for taking care of Brody over the past few days. This is the reward you deserve.

"I rang the doorbell twice and found that you weren't at home, so I could only put the payment in an envelope and put it in your letterbox.

"As I might not be able to come back until tomorrow evening, I might miss the verbal agreement which my grandmother promised—tonight.

"As a lawyer, I value the validity of verbal agreements and hope that they will be carried out strictly.

"Finally, thank you once again.

"Jurgen Cooper."

Mr. Lawyer, your gratitude is so dry and boring that it's even inferior to Brody's, but the explanation for your behavior is very detailed. It really fits the Jurgen style… Also, why place it in my mailbox? If this were Earth, in the time before I transmigrated, I might not even look at the mailbox downstairs for months… Klein smiled as he folded the bills and placed them in his pocket. Then, he took out a sheet of paper and wrote to Detective Stuart.

After writing the beginning pleasantries, he wrote after some deliberation:

“…I found Emlyn White at the Harvest Church near Tuteva Street. It's a very small cathedral belonging to the Church of Mother Earth. It isn't very common in Loen… Emlyn White claimed that it was because of certain matters that he chose to run away from home. Afterwards, he was taken in by the bishop of the Harvest Church and stayed there, becoming a…”

Klein thought for a moment before writing down the word "volunteer."

Then he added simply:

"Thanks to my persuasion, he has returned to 48 Riverbay Avenue. However, he might visit the Harvest Church often for volunteer work."

When he was done, Klein read through it, then he put down the pen and neatly folded the letter.

He rummaged around for an envelope, but he didn't affix the corresponding stamp. He planned to hire someone to deliver it directly to Stuart's house the next day.

If he were to go through the Kingdom's postal system, even if he were to put the letter in the mailbox now, he wouldn't be able to get it taken away by the postman until tomorrow, and then there would be the process of sorting and delivering it. So, although he was also in the royal capital of Backlund, Stuart would have to wait at least until the day after next before seeing the letter. Only then would the Whites be notified. And during this period of time, Emlyn White was a penniless guy with only his figurines.

This is also for the sake of receiving payment early… Klein chuckled, tidied up the coffee table, and returned to the second floor to brush his teeth and take a bath.

…

On Wednesday morning, after spending two soli and entrusting a rental carriage driver to deliver the letter, Klein bought some of the main ingredients for Desi seafood rice, intending to cook fried rice today.

He couldn't help but swallow a mouthful of saliva when he thought of the pearly white rice.

After spending some time, he finally cooked a pot of fragrant fried rice with bacon and black tea after going through all sorts of hassles in the kitchen. It was so delicious that tears almost filled his eyes.

This is truly a moving and nostalgic taste… After eating two large plates of fried rice, Klein sat down on the chair and rubbed his belly.

As Emlyn White's situation had too many twists and turns, his performance had already ended before it had even really begun, and he couldn't achieve the desired goal. Thus, he could only look for another opportunity to take the initiative for a performance.

However, Klein still benefited from this. Failure was also an experience, and it made him understand at least one thing:

Unlike ordinary magicians, my performance not only has aides, but it also has enemies and participants. Their reactions and choices can similarly affect its development. I have to consider all of these elements ahead of time…

This is also a lesson. It's better to be taught a lesson over such a trivial matter than to be schooled when facing important matters…

Klein looked at the empty plate in front of him and contemplated about what other "performances" he could initiate.

After a moment of serious consideration, he realized that there weren't any.

Of course, it wasn't absolute. They were just unsuitable for him to do them now.

For example, Klein had always wanted to take care of that evil spirit in the Fourth Epoch ruins of the Tudor Dynasty. But even if it was Sharron, who had the Scarlet Lunar Corona, and Maric, who had obtained the Rampager Beyonder characteristic of a Wraith, Klein didn't think that they were able to fight against the High-Sequence monster. It was even possible to end up dead before even knowing why.

Taking the initiative to perform isn't equivalent to courting death. It's not about using one's life to perform… Klein warned himself.

There was something else he wanted to do, but he didn't think there was much of a chance.

It was to find the strange child, Will Auceptin, who had brought bad luck to the surgeon, Aaron.

Klein had always been interested in the tarot card which the child possessed, and he wanted to confirm if it was a mystical item.

Unfortunately, this case had already been taken over by the Nighthawks, and Klein didn't want to get involved with his former colleagues.

I'll wait for Dr. Aaron's break time before heading to the Quelaag Club and asking about the progress, and then I'll decide what to do… Klein's thoughts quickly took shape.

According to what he knew, Dr. Aaron was usually free on Friday afternoons and Sundays in which he would play tennis at the Quelaag Club.

Klein had also confirmed one thing through today's Backlund Morning Post. There would be a Beyonder gathering tomorrow night organized by Eye of Wisdom.

I can't sell the Werewolf Beyonder characteristic or the Biological Poison Bottle for the time being. I can't even find someone to turn the former into a mystical item… The High-Sequence Beyonders of the Rose School of Thought are definitely still active nearby, filled with rage. I bet they can't wait to find Sharron, Maric, and their helper before tearing them apart… He had to keep a low profile in this area for the time being… Klein picked up his napkin, wiped his mouth, and began to clear the table.

He had wanted to rest for the day and go to the Quelaag Club for a leisurely day without taking the initiative to perform, but then he recalled the Amon avatar which attempted to penetrate the gray fog, and he recalled the role that the Book of Secrets had played in that harrowing moment.

So Klein lit the fireplace in the living room and brought the Book of Secrets back to the real world. He then concentrated on reading, studying, and taking notes.

Of course, he would later burn the corresponding notes above the gray fog.

It was already noon before he realized it when he suddenly heard the doorbell ring.

After hiding the Book of Secrets, Klein entered the living room and went straight to the door.

The visitor was the thin, bearded Detective Stuart.

He looked at Klein with great reverence and excitement, and he couldn't wait to praise him.

"You really are a great detective with abundant resources and channels. You were actually able to solve this kind of case without any clues!"

…Why do I feel a slight change in my spirituality? It seems like the potion has been digested a little more… In other words, my "performance" still enjoyed some limited success. However, there's only one person in the audience, and only he was fooled into seeing the wonderful outcome… An audience's applause really is effective… Klein was startled before he revealed a warm smile.

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CHAPTER 371
DETECTIVE MORIARTY'S FIRST FAN

"No, it's just good luck. God was watching over me." Klein modestly stepped aside and invited Stuart in.

What he said was the truth, and this matter did involve good luck. Long before Stuart had accepted the mission, he already knew of Emlyn White's whereabouts.

Stewart shivered as he took off his coat and hat and hung them on a rack in the hall.

"The darn weather is getting colder. Perhaps I should try using those coats with cotton stuffed inside them," he said.

"You can't call this cold, right? If you go to the north of Midseashire and live in Winter County for a day, you'll understand what truly low temperatures and true winter are like." Klein chuckled.

Then, he generously asked, "A cup of hot coffee?"

"I would love one." Stuart followed him to the activity room on the first floor. "I've been to north Midseashire, and I know about the cold and the snow there. It was a nice vacation, but Backlund's cold isn't inferior either. It went through my clothes like magic and seeped into my bones. Oh, what a wonderful fireplace!"

Stuart stood in front of the burning fireplace for twenty seconds before he sat down on the sofa. He looked at Klein, who was busy brewing instant coffee, and he said, "I'm going south for a holiday to go fishing at Desi Bay for new year's. What about you? Do you have any vacation plans? We put up with Backlund's air for a year and work hard to save money, all for such a holiday."

"Perhaps, I should head to Desi Bay as well…" Klein said hesitantly. He turned his head to the side of Stuart's face, and for a moment, he seemed to be in a trance.

This involved an agreement.

An appointment with his elder brother, Benson, and sister, Melissa.

"Haha, I'll show you my fishing skills when the time comes." Stuart continued without end, "We still aren't rich enough, otherwise I'd like to travel to Feysac, Intis, and even to the Southern Continent."

After he finished making the coffee, Klein handed the man a white porcelain cup. He took two steps back and sat down across from him.

Holding the cup in his hand, Stuart took two deep breaths of the fragrant and warm steam.

After resting for a few seconds, he put the cup down and said very formally, "According to our agreement, I'll share the reward I received this time with you.

"The Whites gave a total of fifty pounds, and you obviously did more than I did.

"Sherlock, how about thirty pounds? I still have to pay my informants for their work."

Only fifty pounds? A vampire is only worth fifty pounds? Klein couldn't help but silently lampoon.

But he also knew that it wasn't that the Whites didn't want to increase the bounty; it was because they were worried about giving too much money and scaring the detectives into making unnecessary associations, attracting the attention of the police or some official Beyonder organization.

To the average private detective, a fifty-pound mission was already tempting enough, and Klein had only used seven pounds back then to hire detectives to investigate all the red chimney houses in the whole of Tingen City and the towns along its outskirts.

"In addition, the Whites gave you an extra pound, claiming its for your transportation expenses for the past few days." Looking somewhat puzzled, Stuart produced six five-pound notes and one one-pound note.

Klein reached out to take them, casually checked their authenticity and didn't explain the transportation fees.

Stuart didn't ask any further questions and instead said with a smile, "Apart from Mr. Stanton, you're the best detective I've ever met. Did you join this profession midway, or have you studied under a great detective prior to this?"

What great detective have I studied under? There's quite a number. There's Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot, the forever elementary school student, and that guy who swindles others in the name of his grandfather… Klein silently lampooned.

He thought and said, "I come from Midseashire, and I did various jobs before I became a detective."

"That's why you're so rich in knowledge and experience!" Stuart said in enlightenment.

Hey, I'm a bit embarrassed by your flattery… Klein smiled but didn't respond.

Stuart took a sip of his coffee and said, "Sherlock, I hope you can provide me with help in the future if I encounter a difficult case that I'm unable to solve."

My social connections in the detective circles have widened… Klein replied cautiously, "If I have the time when the time comes."

After some idle conversation, Stuart tactfully offered to take his leave, and Klein accompanied him to the door.

After putting on his coat and hat, Stuart was about to open the door and leave when he suddenly turned around and sincerely said, "Sherlock, you live too simply.

"Your talent deserves better coffee."

Ah? Klein was stunned for a moment, but then he immediately felt a bit embarrassed.

He laughed dryly and said, "I can't tell the quality of the coffee. It's all the same to me."

…

After sending Stuart off, Klein went to the butcher's to buy a few ox bones and some beef. He went to the vegetable shop to buy some ingredients such as white radish, rounding up all the required condiments.

He wanted to prepare beef bone radish soup for dinner and eat it with the leftover rice. As for noon, he found a random restaurant on the streets and ate a small serving of lamb chop.

After a leisurely afternoon, Klein continued to study the Book of Secrets, and the more he read, the more he realized that he knew little about mysticism.

Fortunately, he had a solid foundation. He quickly grasped many things once he came into contact with them and pondered over them.

In the evening, he smelled the tantalizing fragrance of the beef bone soup, and his Adam's apple bobbed up and down twice.

He heard the doorbell again, as though it was a bugle to signal dinner time.

Gulping down his saliva, Klein walked behind the door and reached for the handle.

The image of the visitor naturally appeared in his mind. It was the handsome but not masculine red-eyed vampire, Emlyn White.

There's no need to rush him at all… What a man of his word… Klein opened the door and smiled.

"Good evening, Mr. White"

Emlyn raised his chin, letting his impatience show in his expression.

He was about to say something when Klein looked at his brown clerical robes and said with a knowing smile, "You just came over from the Harvest Church?"

Who was the one who said he could resist last night?

Unable to maintain his gentlemanly demeanor, Emlyn gritted his teeth and said, "That old man, that old man…

"Dammit, how do I get rid of this inducing suggestion?"

Before Klein could reply, he patted the clothes on his chest and said with a stern face, "Take me to the patient.

"There's a good dinner waiting for me."

As he spoke, he sniffed indiscernibly, as if he had smelled something.

Klein picked up his coat and hat without saying another word.

"Alright, I'll take you there now."

After closing the door and taking a few steps, he cautiously asked, "Do you have a certificate to practice medicine?"

How else am I supposed to convince Lawyer Jurgen to allow Mrs. Doris to take the medicine?

Emlyn looked up at the sky at a forty-five-degree angle and said, "I don't need those papers to prove my abilities."

Before Klein frowned, he casually added, "It's too simple. I obtained it easily by going through the process."

…This tone makes it sounds like he's rather proud of receiving a certificate for practicing medicine… Klein smiled without a word.

Looking at the wet ground in front of him, Emlyn casually said, "Do you know what I like most about Backlund?"

"What?" Klein responded without any curiosity.

Emlyn chuckled and said, "The persistent gloomy sky with fog that blots out the sun. This allows me to go out during the day without feeling too much discomfort.

"It's great, except for the air."

In other words, the sun really would deal certain damage to vampires? Fortunately, I thought of this yesterday and didn't bring the Sun Brooch with me; otherwise, I wouldn't be able to communicate with Emlyn… Klein seemed to gain an understanding.

As they conversed, they had already arrived outside the Jurgens, and Klein went up to ring the doorbell.

After a while, the door opened, and Mrs. Doris, who was dressed thickly at home, said with pleasant surprise, "Mr. Detective, I wasn't expecting you?"

Brody the black cat crouched to the side, looking at Emlyn warily, as though it felt that something was amiss about him.

Klein pointed to the vampire beside him.

"I became acquainted with a doctor who's good at treating lung diseases, so I've asked him to come and give you a checkup. Let me do the introductions. This is Dr. Emlyn White."

"Is that so? You still actually remembered this? What a good child!" Doris happily invited the two inside.

Child… Klein's mouth twitched, but he didn't say anything in the end.

On the way into the living room, Emlyn whispered, "The patient's problems are irreversible. She's very old and rather weak.

"Even if I give her the medicine, she would only be able to live through this winter. She would pass away in three to five years.

"Unless she's given an immortal potion or the like as spoken in the legends, that's all that can be done. Or should I turn her into a Sanguine? But at her age, she can no longer endure the changes a Beyonder characteristic can do to her body. Furthermore, my parents and I don't have any excess characteristics left."

Irreversible… Klein was startled and silently sighed.

He said to Emlyn, "Make her the medicine first. We'll leave that to after the winter."

"Alright, I have a type of ready-made medicine with me that's suitable for this kind of situation." Emlyn didn't stand on ceremony as he sat down on the sofa.

At that moment, Lawyer Jurgen was walking out of the kitchen as he took off his apron. He asked Klein about the purpose of his visit.

"Dr. White, what do you think of my grandmother's lung disease?" Jurgen asked seriously.

Emlyn was obviously very experienced in such situations. He first explained the ins and outs of lung disease, and after most of it flew past Jurgen's head, he said, "What she needs most is warm and healthy air. That's my most sincere advice.

"In addition, I have special medicine that she can take for free."

As he spoke, he took out his certificate and a small metal bottle.

"Will there be any side effects?" Jurgen asked cautiously.

"No, the only problem is that it can't cure the root of the problem completely; it's just a temporary cure," Emlyn replied in a very professional manner. "If it weren't for Detective Moriarty, I wouldn't let anyone try it."

"Perhaps I can give it a try? Cough…" Mrs. Doris interrupted.

Jurgen glanced at Klein who, having performed a divination prior to this, nodded affirmatively.

"Alright." Jurgen finally made his decision.

He watched warily as Mrs. Doris drank the bottle of medicine and carefully observed her reaction.

There wasn't much change to Mrs. Doris at first, but she gradually began to feel her breathing lighten.

She stood up and bent down to pick up the cat. She happily said, "I feel much better!"

Seeing this scene, Jurgen's usually stoic face had his lips curl up slightly.

However, Klein was thinking about the three to five years.

He curled a smile and sighed to himself.

This can also be considered a type of magic show, I guess. Using Beyonder powers to create fake outcomes to make the audience happy…

1. Referring to Jimmy Kudo from Detective Conan.1. Referring to Hajime Kindaichi from The Kindaichi Case Files.

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CHAPTER 372
MISSING CASE

After waiting for more than half an hour and confirming that nothing unexpected had happened, Klein and Emlyn White left Lawyer Jurgen's house and proceeded in silence, each of them preoccupied with their own thoughts. Soon, they arrived outside 15 Minsk Street.

The vampire, Emlyn White, put his fist to his mouth, coughed lightly, and said, "The payment has been paid. I hope we won't meet again in the future."

That sounds pretty cool, but Mr. White, have you forgotten something important? Klein smiled politely.

"I will visit Bishop Utravsky every now and then, and I hope you will not be at the Harvest Church when the time comes.

"That way, I don't have to busy myself with finding a way to solve the inducing suggestion planted in your psyche."

Emlyn White's expression suddenly became very strange. He stayed silent for two seconds before he raised his chin and said, "We have many powerful mysticologists among the Sanguine. I will write to them for help."

After he finished speaking, he pressed his hand to his chest and bowed to bid farewell.

Turning around and taking a few steps, he suddenly slowed down, turned his head, and asked hesitantly, "What were you cooking over here?"

"Beef bone radish soup, with rice and chili peppers from the Feynapotter highlands," Klein said in anticipation as he breathed in the fragrance drifting out from the house.

Emlyn frowned and shook his head.

"Chili peppers aren't things fancied by the Sanguine."

Frankly speaking, it's hard for me to imagine a vampire eating chili peppers. Of course, I occasionally imagine a vampire holding a steamed bun and chewing on garlic and onions… Klein silently lampooned, pointed to the door, and indicated that he was about to enjoy his dinner.

Emlyn White thought for a second, lowered his voice, and said in deliberation, "Last night, I thought over things for a long time and found out that you actually didn't do anything, so why are you asking for compensation? That old man would've let me leave at any moment."

Klein chuckled.

"No, that's not how the accounts are done. Your parents assigned a mission to find you, not to save you. In the end, I found you. According to the agreement, the reward should belong to me.

"Besides, if I hadn't reminded you, you might've stayed in Harvest Church for weeks or months before you realized that you were free to leave. Furthermore, you wouldn't have noticed the seed planted in your mind."

"Are you hinting that my intelligence isn't up to par?" Emlyn's face twisted.

No, I'm saying it directly… Klein smiled but didn't say anything else. He just opened the door and went straight to the kitchen, his mind full of the clear and alluring soup, the white rice, the soft yet chewy beef, the marrow hidden deep in the bones, the sweet, refreshing radishes with meaty flavors, and the shredded chili from the Feynapotter highlands.

In the spicy-hot shreds, there were also pink rose salt and green parsley leaves.

…

On Thursday morning, as promised, Klein went to the value-for-money coffee shop in East Borough.

Old Kohler, who was still wearing the same thick jacket as before, was sitting in a corner, matching tea that barely tasted like tea with a loaf of black bread.

Klein came in front of him, took out the things he had prepared long ago, and pushed them towards him.

It was payment consisting of two five-soli notes, four one-soli notes, and a handful of copper pennies specially designed to increase the effect of the payment.

Old Kohler stared straight at them for quite a while before finally reaching out his right hand to take them with a tremble.

He looked at the money over and over again, raised his hand to wipe his eyes, and squeezed out a smile.

"At the dock, we carry the heavy goods and do some troublesome cleaning with our feet in the cold and dirty water, only for one soli a day…”

And there was a total of 15 soli here!

Klein listened in silence. A few seconds later, he said, "What have you heard recently? What did you notice?"

Old Kohler put away his payment, took another sip of his tea, pinched the corners of his eyes and said, "I've met a lot of dockworkers, and I've reconnected with friends I used to know when I was a tramp. Some of them

have found employment in factories, and some of them have been switching between the workhouse and the parks. Heh, just like how I was in the past.

"Recently, there has been a rumor from who-knows-where that since we believe in one of the seven gods, why don't we directly pray to the Creator of everything? It's said that 'He' didn't truly pass away, and he remains in everyone's body and in all things.

"Praying to 'Him' will result in our redemption. Not only will we enter 'His' kingdom after death, but we will also have a better life before death. For example, we don't need to work so hard, and we can have butter and oily meat every day."

This… Is this some theory the Aurora Order has spread about the Fallen Creator? After what happened to Lanevus, they've begun to pay attention to the poor in East Borough, the dock area, and the factory district, hoping to use them for certain purposes? I wonder if the three Churches have noticed this… They probably have… Klein tucked a piece of butter between two slices of toast and took a bite without knowing what to expect.

Old Kohler went on for a while before saying, "Mr. Detective, according to your instructions, I paid attention to the female textile workers. In the end, with the help of the police, their struggles failed, but, heh heh, the leaders became the factory's supervisors, and a third of them lost their jobs.

"Some of them are actively looking for new jobs, some have become street girls, and some have gone off somewhere. The entire East Borough is in chaos."

If this was the situation when Rear Admiral Hurricane Qilangos came to Backlund, he could come to East Borough to kill one or two people every day without anyone discovering or noticing the act… Klein sighed in his heart.

Old Kohler continued to recount what he saw and heard daily before saying, "By the way, Liv's youngest daughter has gone missing."

"Liv?" Klein was certain that he had never heard of the name.

Old Kohler then said in realization, "She's the laundry maid you and Mr. Reporter met last time, the one who was arguing with someone. She was always at home doing the washing with her two daughters, but yesterday, when her two daughters were returning home from delivering the laundry, one of them ended up missing. The younger one, what a pity. She's been a widow for years, and she has always been counting on her two daughters, and now… Sigh, the police in East Borough definitely won't look too hard for her."

Unlucky people tend to meet with even worse situations because they have no ability to resist danger or change their environment… This phrase suddenly flashed through Klein's mind.

After a few seconds of stone-like silence, he said, "Take me to see them. I'm a detective, so maybe I can help them find her."

"…They have no money," Old Kohler reminded him.

Klein picked up his hat and cane and said, "I occasionally do volunteer work too."

…

Cherwood Borough, in the apartment which the two ladies originally rented.

Xio had resumed her life as a bounty hunter, and Fors hastened the pace of her new book, hoping to save the money needed for the Beyonder ingredients required by the Trickmaster potion.

But writing a book wasn't something one could write that easily. Fors scratched her hair irritably and decided to go out for a walk to seek out inspiration.

As she walked, she found that she had unknowingly returned to a familiar place.

Diagonally ahead of her was the Yosifov Clinic, a fairly large private clinic where she had first worked.

After staring at it for a while, Fors thought of the old lady who had guided her into the Beyonder world. She turned into a small alley on the right and took a shortcut to a nearby street.

The two sides of the street had leaves fluttering down the parasol tree. It was a relatively quiet place.

Fors remembered that the old lady lived at Unit 39. Back then, she would occasionally visit personally to deliver medicine, give injections, or even to help with the daily chores.

It's almost been three years. That place should've been rented out again. There might have been several changes in tenants… I still remember when I came to tidy up the items she left behind. I discovered many notebooks about mysticism… Fors walked under the nearly barren parasol tree and slowly approached Unit 39.

As she recalled her past experiences, she gradually gained some inspiration for writing.

At that moment, she saw an old man in a heavy woolen coat and a black half top hat standing in front of Unit 39. He had rung the bell three times.

After a few minutes, seeing that no one was opening the door, the old man with blue eyes shook his head and turned around. He whispered in puzzlement, "Still no one…”

He suddenly noticed Fors who was looking at him from nearby. He hurriedly walked over, gently and urgently smiled, and said, "Beautiful lady, do you live in this district? Do you know Laubero and Aulisa?"

Aulisa? Isn't that the old lady's name? There haven't been any tenants in this house lately? After some deliberation, Fors said, "I don't know if the Mrs. Aulisa I know is the one you're looking for. She lived here for a long time, but she passed away three years ago."

"Passed away three years ago? What about Laubero?" the old man with wrinkles at the corners of his eyes hurriedly asked.

"Her husband passed away even earlier than she did," Fors answered honestly.

The elder was momentarily stunned before revealing a sorrowful expression.

After a moment of silence, he said, "Thank you, good lady.

"I am the elder brother of Laubero, and I've been living in Midseashire all this time. As I haven't received any letters from them for a long time, I decided to come and pay them a visit.

"Can you tell me what happened to them in the past few years?"

Mrs. Aulisa's husband's elder brother… Could he be a descendant of the family she spoke of? Fors suddenly snapped to her senses and replied with a smile, "No problem.

She quickly thought through what she could and couldn't say.

The elder pointed behind him and said, "There's quite a nice coffee shop over there."

…

Klein once again stepped into the humid room of a slightly old apartment in East Borough.

He saw the woman who had quarreled with the street girl last time over her contempt towards her profession. She was standing in a pile of clothes. Her wrinkled face had lost a lot of its spirit, she lost her laborious drive, and she looked lifeless.

As for her eldest daughter, the seventeen to eighteen-year-old girl who was sitting by the bed and washing clothes, she kept sobbing.

"It's all my fault. I didn't watch over her properly…

"I shouldn't have taken her into the secluded alley.

"She even said that she was going to learn a few more words at the free school tonight.

"It's my fault, it's all my fault…”

Liv suddenly regained her senses and turned to look at her eldest daughter. She wiped away her sad expression and berated her fiercely, "What are you crying for? Get up and wash the clothes!

"Do you want to starve? Do you plan on not even being able to attend the free school?"

After screaming, she saw Klein and Old Kohler at the door.

"Old Kohler… This is?" she asked doubtfully.

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CHAPTER 373
SEARCH

Old Kohler seemed to be a slightly afraid of her ferocity as he subconsciously took a step back.

"Liv, this is a detective, and he w-wishes to help you find Daisy."

Liv's wrinkled, peeling face turned to Klein and said coldly, "We've already made a police report."

Although she was perhaps in her thirties, she looked to be in her fifties.

Klein looked around the room where many wet clothes hung. He vaguely remembered the last time he was here. There had been a thirteen or fourteen-year-old girl, carefully holding a crude homemade iron to iron the clothes which had wrinkled from being hung to dry. Her hands had been covered with burns.

She's the "missing" Daisy… Klein looked back at the laundry maid, Liv, and said in a neutral tone, "Do you believe that the East Borough police will really be looking for Daisy?

"Are you sure the people who caused Daisy to go 'missing' wouldn't cast their sights on your family?

"Do you wish to lose another daughter after losing one?"

When the cruel yet heart-wrenching words reached Liv's ears, the indifferent expression on her face slowly crumbled. She turned agape, but she couldn't say anything. The corners of her eyes gradually turned red.

She abruptly lowered her head and muttered to herself in pain and despair, "I don't have any money…”

The room suddenly became silent. Even the sobbing girl didn't make another sound.

Klein pursed his lips and let out a silent sigh.

"I occasionally do volunteer work, simply to help others. Heh heh, I haven't done so in a long time, so please give me a chance."

"Volunteer work?" Liv lifted her head and ruminated over the phrase.

Klein nodded slightly and answered, "The job will be done pro bono. No, it is not completely free either. Kindness will bring me great satisfaction.

"Since you have no other solutions, why not give it a try?"

Liv was silent for a moment. She raised her hand, which had wrinkled from being soaked in water for an extended period of time, wiped her eyes, and said in a low voice, "Mr. Detective, you… you really are a kind and good gentleman…”

Her voice suddenly became choked with sobs.

“…This was what happened—at midday before yesterday, at noon, Daisy delivered a load of washed laundry under Freja's lead. It was just outside East Borough, and they needed to cross several streets.

"In order to rush back for lunch, Freja had chosen a secluded alley, but a momentary distraction left her realizing that Daisy, who had been following her, was gone.

"She retraced her route but never found Daisy, and Daisy hasn't come back yet.

"Where did this happen, Freja?"

The girl named Freja had already stood up, her eyes were red and puffy.

She sobbed and said, "Right here, right here in Broken Axe Lane, Mister Detective. Will Daisy be alright?"

"Probably," Klein replied without much of an expression.

He looked around and asked, "Do you have anything that Daisy often carries? I can borrow a police dog. It has an excellent sense of smell and can be used to find a person based on the lingering scent."

“…No," Liv thought for a moment and said with a sad expression.

Freja once again shed tears. She felt as if the situation had turned into one of despair once again.

Suddenly, she blinked and said, "Wait, there's something.

"Daisy's vocabulary book!"

"Vocabulary book?" Old Kohler asked.

Liv sniffed and said, "I make Freja and Daisy attend the free school at night. I can keep washing clothes, but they can't always be doing the same."

This lady is such a good mother… Klein couldn't help but sigh.

The free classes offered at night were set up by the three major Churches or some charity organizations. From eight to ten o'clock in the evening, the school would be free of charge and would even provide stationery and a certain amount of paper. It was an education that was need-blind, and it would at most involve some religious knowledge. Klein had heard Old Neil mention that he had once been a teacher for the Church of the Evernight Goddess for several years.

Because there were very few people who volunteered to be teachers in the free school, a unique teaching method was established. Teachers would arrive early, gather the few students who had the best academic progress, imbue them with the content for that day's class, and then put them in charge of teaching the different classes. The teachers would supervise, correcting any mistakes. It was called a "tutorial system."

Corresponding to the free classes were the free organizations such as the technical workers' workshop, which were truly accessible to the poor, and one of the few outlets to escape from poverty.

Unfortunately, there were too few similar organizations, and it was difficult for them to play a substantial role.

At this moment, the sobbing Freja added, "Daisy liked studying very much. She was made the tutor of her class by her teacher. She would put together the vocabulary words she had copied and hugged them in her bed every day. She would wake up early and go out into the street to recite them under the light of dawn. She's always found it regretful that there are no street lamps around here…”

As she spoke, Freja rushed back to the bunk bed and took out a stack of crumpled paper from under the tattered pillow.

Due to it being in a humid environment for extended periods of time, the words that were copied on it had already smudged.

The edges of the sheets of paper were worn out, as though they had been turned over and over by someone for a long time.

"Mister Detective, i-is this okay?" Freja handed Klein the so-called vocabulary book, which had no binding at all, and anxiously asked.

"Yes," Klein answered very simply.

He wasn't trying to comfort Freja. Although it wasn't the kind of items Daisy carried around all the time, it was something that had accompanied her all this while. Moreover, it had been projected with Daisy's strong will. It was excellent for using it as dowsing to seek her out.

He casually flipped through the vocabulary book and said, "Then I'll start taking action. The earlier I find Daisy, the better."

Liv and Freja were unable to find words to describe their feelings. All they could do was watch as Klein and Old Kohler leave, repeating the words "thank you," "thank you, Mr. Detective," and "thank you, good gentleman."

After leaving the apartment, Klein turned to Old Kohler and said, "You should pay attention to those female textile workers who lost their jobs, especially those who have neither found new jobs nor become street girls, and pay more attention to those who have gone off to unknown places…

"Pay attention to your own safety. Ask less and listen more. If you do this well, you'll get a bonus."

"Alright!" Old Kohler nodded heavily.

He didn't immediately bid farewell. After hesitating for a moment, he asked with a tone full of expectation, "You'll find Daisy, won't you, Mister Detective?"

"I can only say that I will do my best." Klein didn't make any guarantees.

Old Kohler sighed and smiled bitterly.

"I've lost my child, so I'm very unwilling to see this sort of thing happen…”

He waved his hand and walked towards another street.

Klein left the area at a leisurely pace, wrapping Daisy's "vocabulary book" around the head of the cane and, without attracting any attention, completed

a "Dowsing Rod Seeking."

There are results. Towards the northwest… For the time being, It's not possible to confirm if I'm suffering any interference or misdirection… He looked down at the direction in which the cane was going to fall and put out his palm to steady it.

According to the revelation, Klein went all the way out of East Borough and hired a rental carriage.

Half an hour later, the carriage, which occasionally changed directions, stopped at Iris Street, near Cherwood Borough and West Borough. It stopped in front of a house with a vast lawn, a wide garden, a small fountain square, and a marble statue.

At this moment, Klein's cane had fallen down inside the carriage and was aimed straight at that direction!

Through the window, Klein could see the guards patrolling inside the gates and ferocious dogs with their tongues out.

The security inside was quite tight.

More importantly, even without using divination, his spiritual intuition made him sense that there was great danger hidden within!

What is this place? How can Daisy's disappearance involve such a dangerous place? Klein thought for a few seconds, then he told the carriage driver to keep going.

The carriage driver replied with some surprise, "Sir, are you not here to visit Mr. Capim?"

Capim? The name sounded extremely familiar to Klein.

He smiled and asked, "Why do you think so?"

"There will always be people coming out from East Borough who ride in my carriage all the way here. Heh heh, this is the home of the rich and powerful Mr. Capim," the carriage driver casually replied.

East Borough… Capim… Tycoon… Klein suddenly remembered who Capim was.

There were many rumors that he was the leader of a bloody criminal organization which was stained with blood. He was involved in the disappearance of many innocent girls!

And in reality, he was a tycoon who knew quite a few important figures.

Without another word, Klein leaned back against the wall and half-closed his eyes.

The horse carriage slowly moved forward. The luxurious villa was left behind as it disappeared from the window.

…

In a small booth in a coffee shop.

Fors already knew that the old man across her was called Lawrence Nord, who came from Midseashire's Constant City and was a public school teacher.

He didn't know that Mrs. Aulisa's husband was dead, nor that Mrs. Aulisa had inherited his estate and become a Beyonder, much less know that Mrs. Aulisa had left me her relics… Could he also be a Beyonder? Does he have the ability to divine? After taking a sip of Fermo coffee, she organized her words and said, "I was a doctor at the nearby Yosifov Clinic, and Mrs. Aulisa came to see me often. That was when her husband, Mr. Laubero had already passed away…

“…Sometimes I would accompany her by chatting with her and helping her do things like…

"So in the end, she made a will, giving me her savings and cash. She donated jewelry, books, furniture, and other things to a charity. This was done under the supervision of her assigned law firm."

Fors was telling the truth, but not the whole truth.

Lawrence pinched his forehead and said, "What a pity. I don't understand why Aulisa didn't contact me over all those years."

"She didn't mention your name. She was vaguely dissatisfied with Mr. Laubero's family," Fors replied frankly.

Lawrence fell silent for a moment before saying, "Thank you for informing me. It has made me understand certain things."

"By the way, where are Laubero and Aulisa buried?"

"Grimm Cemetery." Fors took out a pocket watch and gave it a look before saying, "Mr. Lawrence, I still have things to tend to. I should be leaving."

Lawrence didn't stop her. He got up and saw her off.

After sitting down again, he rubbed his temples in distress and silently muttered to himself, *Laubero is dead, and he didn't leave any children behind, and I don't know what Aulisa did to his Beyonder characteristic… Richard died at the hands of the Aurora Order… Sam doesn't even wish to contact us at all, having no interest in shouldering the responsibility of the family name…*

Will the Abraham family slowly disappear like this?

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CHAPTER 374
ARTIFICIAL SLEEPWALKING

Lawrence sat in the coffee shop booth, unable to stop himself from thinking about the hardships of the Abraham family over the years.

Ever since they had split up into smaller families and settled in other places, the Elder Council's control over the family members hit rock-bottom. A great number of Abrahams refused to advance, in order to avoid the effects of the curse; hence, many of them remained at Sequence 8 or 9. Some didn't even attempt to become Beyonders, wishing to be ordinary people with a certain amount of knowledge so as to live a calm and peaceful life.

The Elder Council believed that this was an act of forgetting the family's honor, but it couldn't be harsh on such actions since it was tantamount to self-destruction.

In such a situation, the upper echelons of the Abraham family began to think of introducing changes. They imitated the teacher-apprentice inheritance system of the Life School of Thought, and they trained non-family members, hoping that once they advanced to become High-Sequence Beyonders, then they would, in turn, be able to help the Abraham family deal with the curse that had existed for about 1,500 years and find their ancestor, Bethel Abraham, who had vanished in the War of the Four Emperors.

The plan started off smoothly, and the apprentices who didn't have to worry about the curse quickly became stronger and stronger under the Abraham family's meticulous nurturing. Within a short period of ten years, there were several strong Sequence 5 individuals among them, while not a single

person among the direct descendants of the Abraham family was Sequence 6.

The trunk was too weak, but the branches were too strong; hence, the seeds of tragedy were planted, and the ambitious apprentices began casting their sights on the powerful Sealed Artifacts that the Abraham family possessed.

Their plot failed, but it also resulted in serious repercussions. All the non-family members at Sequences 6 and 5 were of the opinion that their positions within the Abraham family didn't match their own strength and that they couldn't be trusted, preventing them from being in possession of certain Sealed Artifacts.

In the process of going back and forth, with difficult negotiations occurring and compromises between the two parties, an accident happened. One of them, Traveler Botis, was lured by the True Creator into joining the Aurora Order, which led to a terrible disaster.

In this disaster, the upper echelons of the Abraham family were almost completely destroyed. More than half of the few powerful Sealed Artifacts were lost, and only three were left. As a result, Lawrence's brother, who he shared the same mother with, Richard, died.

Not only did Botis benefit greatly from it, but he also gathered all the Beyonder ingredients he needed, and with the help of the True Creator, he successfully overcame the dangers and became a demigod, becoming one of the five Saints of the Aurora Order, the Saint of Mystery.

After the disaster, the rebuilt Abraham family's Elder Council reflected over the actions of the past few years, but they couldn't find a solution to the problem. Emotions such as negativity, dejection, and hopelessness shrouded the hearts of the few remaining family members.

Lawrence didn't wish to be placed in such an environment or face sighing and repressed emotions every day. He found a reason to leave the Elder

Council and came to Backlund to look for his other brothers, Laubero, who he shared the same mother, and Sam, who he didn't share the same mother.

But now, he suddenly realized that he was the only one remaining from his father's line.

He was already nearly eighty-years-old, and all his children had died in the disaster brought about by Botis.

Just recalling the past made him feel sorrow from the bottom of his heart.

The most painful thing was that he couldn't see the hope for revenge, and he couldn't see the dawn of his clan's glory appearing once more.

I'm already very old, and I was also injured before. Unless it's absolutely necessary, I wouldn't dare to use my Beyonder powers anymore, which would cause me to lose control or even cause the curse to descend… What is the future of the Abraham family? Lawrence took a sip of the Fermo coffee and fell into a long silence.

…

Upon returning to her rented house, Fors immediately entered the bedroom and locked the wooden door behind her.

She sat on the edge of the bed, calmed her mind, and whispered the honorific name that represented hope and the future.

"The Fool that doesn't belong to this era,

"You are the mysterious ruler above the gray fog;

"You are the King of Yellow and Black who wields good luck.

"I wish to inform you of what I have encountered today.

"I met the elder brother of the husband of the old lady who made me become an Apprentice. He seems to be a member of a certain family…

"I didn't mention anything related to mysticism, but I'm worried that he has extremely powerful divination abilities and will be able to find out the complete truth…"

…

At this moment, Klein happened to be above the gray fog.

He saw the crimson star that represented The Magician expanding outward, rippling as he heard the stacked layers of pleas.

After figuring out the details, Klein tapped the edge of the ancient table and said to himself silently, *How cautious for her to know to seek help from The Fool.*

Besides, your guess isn't wrong. The corresponding Sequence 7 for Apprentice is Astrologer…

Having recently read the Book of Secrets thoroughly, he had quickly come up with a plan that would help him interfere with divination through rituals.

I have to say, with the Book of Secrets and my advancement to Sequence 7, I'm becoming more and more godlike when above the gray fog. Of course, for the time being, I'm still just an empty shell…

Speaking of which, I've been acting in front of Miss Justice and Mr. Hanged Man several times, fooling them completely. Why didn't I receive any feedback from my spirituality? The speed at which I digest the potion doesn't seem to be getting faster as a result. Does it have to happen in the real world? Yes, it might be possible that their "applause," as an audience, has been blocked by the gray fog, preventing them from directly affecting me. Just like how the Eternal Blazing Sun and the True Creator are unable to penetrate the gray fog to find this mysterious space…

From the looks of it, the reaction between the gray fog and this mysterious space is very mechanical. It's not sentient enough, and it lacks intelligence… However, to me, this is actually a good thing…

In the midst of his thoughts, Klein turned his knowledge into an ancient piece of goatskin and threw it into the crimson star that symbolized The Magician.

A boundless grayish-white fog suddenly filled the air in front of Fors's eyes, and an illusory yellowish-brown goatskin descended from the sky.

When she saw the information written on it, she suddenly felt at peace.

With Mr. Fool, Mr. Lawrence certainly wouldn't be able to get the correct revelations via divination! Fors sincerely expressed her gratitude and busily prepared for the ritual.

She had seen a lot of instances where evil spirits did harm to others. In fact, she didn't trust The Fool that much, but the curse of the full moon forced her to rely on him.

Regardless of how bad the consequences are, I will just lose my life. Without the help of Mr. Fool, I would've already lost control during the last Blood Moon and become a monster… Every day I live is a day gained. This is all given to me by Mr. Fool, and he can take it back at any time. Well, it's best if he doesn't… Fors took a breath and lit the two candles that symbolized The Fool.

The initial steps of the ritual were no different from those she had mastered before. This continued until the candles were lit and the essential oils, extract, and herbal powder were thrown into the fire.

When the fragrance of a serene etherealness filled the room, a faint, illusory fog covered the entire altar. According to the contents of the goatskin, Fors quickly adjusted her body and mind, entered Cogitation and chanted the corresponding name of The Fool over and over again.

Such monotonous, repetitive behavior allowed the originally calm and relaxed Fors to slowly enter a state where the mind was in deep sleep while her spirituality dispersed. Her entire being felt groggy, but she maintained a strange sense of lucidness. She felt as if her spirit was floating about, constantly moving upwards.

This was similar to the "secret deed" process that was formed with the help of an external object, but it was different in many ways. This was a technique in mediumship and was used to communicate with higher level spirits. At an extremum, it could even allow a Beyonder to travel the spirit world under the pretext of maintaining a special lucidness.

Some Beyonders who specialized in influencing the mind called it "artificial sleepwalking." They could use techniques such as hypnosis to make ordinary people enter this state as well.

In that way, an ordinary person would appear to be in a deep slumber, yet they would be able to answer questions. Although their eyes and mouths were closed, they could detect the presence of various Spirit Bodies around them; thus, completing a certain degree of communication.

The reason why Klein didn't let Fors use the secret deed ritual was that it could only give knowledge or direct effects such as purification or corruption, letting the target's mind gain a wonderful experience. It couldn't interfere with the divination or other matters done by another person.

Simply put, the secret deed ritual directly affected the target's Spirit Body, Astral Projection, Body of Heart and Mind, and Ether Body. The related positive or negative states were removed, and with the artificial sleepwalking ritual, it allowed Klein to do something indirect so as to deal with any outside interference.

In a daze, Fors felt herself drifting back to the majestic old palace above the gray fog, and she saw Mr. Fool sitting high above, looking down at everything.

Klein looked at the image of The Magician projected by the dark red starlight. He unhurriedly picked up a paper figurine that he had found earlier from his trash pile in the corner.

As a Seer who had advanced twice, he had many ways to interfere with the divination of others, so he didn't need to rely on mystical items to help him.

At this moment, due to the effects of the ritual, the mysterious space above the gray fog started to tremble slightly, and some of the power was flowing due to the perturbation.

Klein's left hand pressed the Dark Emperor card on the surface of the long bronze table, connecting it with his own Spirit Body and uplifting himself to a higher level. It raised his level just like the previous times he used the Flaring Sun Charm and Azik's copper whistle to solidify his Spirit Body.

Then, with a flick of his right wrist, he threw the paper figurine out.

The paper figurine suddenly expanded in size, and on its back, twelve pairs of black angel wings which were cut out of paper grew out. The feathers were vivid and lifelike.

The paper "angel" pierced through the dark red light and overlapped with the illusory figure of The Magician.

Without any warning, it started to burn and completely disappeared.

The half-awake Fors seemed to see a dignified and majestic angel as it wrapped layer upon layers of pitch-black wings around her!

After an unknown period of time, Fors suddenly awoke from her artificial sleepwalking state. In front of her were only the three candles quietly burning on the altar and the fog that had permeated the entire room. At the tip of her nose was the familiar fragrance of serene etherealness.

Angel… Fors was so lost in thought that she momentarily forgot to end the ritual.

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CHAPTER 375
AN "EVIL GOD'S" IMPRESSIVE ACT

1, 2, 3, 4, 5… I think there were twelve pairs of wings… According to the canon descriptions of the various Churches, that's an angel of the highest rank… Fors tried to recall what she had seen in her reverie. She was both shocked and not that shocked, as if what she had encountered was a shocking event that she had previously taken for granted but had simply never encountered before.

It isn't surprising that Mr. Fool has the services of an angel. From the fact that Miss Justice and Mr. Hanged Man occasionally use the word "Him" to refer to him, one can imagine so. The fact that he's able to isolate the effects of the moon's ravings allows me to infer… However, my request was only to interfere with Mr. Lawrence's divination; yet, "He" actually made an Angel protect me. Isn't this too extravagant? Or is this a routine act for "Him"?

Uh, one more problem. Why are the feathers on the angel's wings black? Does this signify degeneracy or Death? What is the true identity of Mr. Fool? Which great being is "He"? Death who was rumored to have died in the Pale Era? "He" wishes to be reborn through the Tarot Gatherings? Fors suddenly took a deep breath, completely unconcerned that the gentleman named Lawrence would find anything wrong with her through his divination.

On the realization that she had already joined the Tarot Club, she smiled wryly and whispered silently, *I can only do as Emperor Roselle said, "Take things one step at a time…"*

After gathering her thoughts, Fors humbly thanked Mr. Fool once more. Following the normal process of a ritual, she extinguished the three candles' flame and began to clear the altar which was filled with all kinds of items.

…

Above the gray fog, Klein temporarily put the matter of the Abraham family at the back of his mind.

According to his original plan, he conjured a pen and paper and wrote the following divination statement: "Daisy's current situation."

Putting the fountain pen away, Klein stacked Daisy's vocabulary book and the piece of paper with the divination statement on it and held them in his left hand.

Then, leaning back in his chair, he entered a state of Cogitation, reciting the words "Daisy's current situation" over and over again.

After seven times, Klein fell asleep, his eyes black with a hint of red before grayness surfaced in them.

One scene after another began to flash. Some were contiguous, some had gaps, and some were completely incoherent.

Klein saw Liv's youngest daughter, a thirteen- or fourteen-year-old girl who persisted despite being repeatedly scalded. She was dragged into a remote alley by a man wearing a heavy jacket and a grayish-black cap after he covered her mouth with a handkerchief from behind.

Another man, who was dressed the same, took her legs, and they lifted her as they quickly walked away.

Their destination was the carriage parked outside the alley.

The whole incident was over in less than two minutes, and by the time Daisy's sister, Freja, returned to search for Daisy, the carriage was already gone.

…

Within the carriage, a sharp, ice-cold dagger was held to the muddleheaded Daisy's face, and lewd threats rang in her ears.

…

The carriage drove into the luxurious villa.

…

Daisy was in a small, dark room, and from time to time, the sound of women's cries, screams, and curses echoed outside.

…

Daisy woke up and cried out for help, but the door was opened, and she was kicked away. The pain made it impossible for her to get up.

She wept as she constantly cried for "Mother" and "Freja."

…

Klein opened his eyes and realized that the paper he held in his left hand had already been crumpled by his tight grip.

He had established that Capim was the mastermind behind the many disappearances of young ladies and that he was the boss of a criminal organization.

The problem, however, was that the case shouldn't and couldn't involve powerful Beyonder forces. At most, there would be a few money-hungry

Beyonders at Sequence 7, 8, or 9 that were helping out. It wouldn't have made Klein's spiritual intuition give him warnings of intense danger the moment he approached the villa.

Is Capim himself a Sequence 6 or even Sequence 5 Beyonder? However, it's not difficult for a Beyonder of this level to earn money. There's no need to do such dirty and complicated matters. He just has to find all the gangs and collect protection fees via a protection racket… It would be easy, and it wouldn't dirty his hands… Could there be some hidden plot behind Capim's human trafficking? As he pondered, Klein used the power of the gray fog to restore Daisy's vocabulary book to its original state.

After a few seconds of silence, he took out another piece of goatskin and wrote a new divination statement: "Saving Daisy is a dangerous matter."

After reading it carefully twice, Klein removed the spirit pendulum from his left wrist, letting the topaz pendant fall and hang above the surface of the paper, almost to the point of touching the statement.

After taking a few seconds to compose himself, he closed his eyes and began to recite the divination statement he had just written.

When he finished reciting it, Klein opened his eyes and looked at the pendulum in his left hand.

The topaz pendant was rotating clockwise at a fairly fast frequency and with a rather high amplitude!

This meant that saving Daisy was a rather dangerous act!

However, it isn't one of total despair. There's still a possibility, a significant chance of success, as long as I can seize it… Klein deciphered the revelation from the spirit pendulum.

He leaned back in his chair, closed his eyes, and said with a self-deprecating smile, *Wasn't I looking for an opportunity to perform?*

This is it!

As a Magician, I have to challenge something of a higher difficulty. Otherwise, I would be called a Trickmaster and not a Magician.

Completing the seemingly impossible, even if the outcome is nothing but an illusion, that's the image of a magician in my heart. As for whether it's one of the rules or not, I still need confirmation…

Klein tapped the edge of the ancient table and quickly made his decision.

To him, the most troubling thing about saving Daisy and dealing with Capim was that he didn't know anything about Capim. He didn't know how many other Beyonders were in the villa or the Sequences and pathways they had.

This made Klein unable to make specific preparations.

And for a Magician, the first rule was: "Never perform unprepared!"

Many seemingly impromptu performances actually involved significant preparations. For example, long periods of practice or thorough mastery of diverting attention away from the situation.

Should I get Miss Justice's help to learn more about Capim's background for my adorer? Klein seriously considered the options available to him.

However, he quickly rejected this idea.

No, I won't be able to receive detailed information. Although Capim is involved with many powerful figures and the wealthy, it's not something that can be publicized. Miss Justice will, at most, learn of the nobles, Members of Parliament, or civil servants which he is involved with, but she won't be able to determine how many Beyonders are in his villa, much less the traps or the layout…

Through the clues from these connections, Miss Justice might be able to figure out what I wish to know given a few weeks time, but that's too slow. Rescuing Daisy needs to be done as soon as possible. Any delays will result in a tragedy.

Klein's eyes swept across the surface of the long bronze table and onto the junk pile in the corner. His mind began to formulate an idea.

On the one hand, I can get Miss Magician and her friend, Miss Xio, to investigate Capim's background and determine which Beyonders he has ties with. The two ladies are very well connected in East Borough, several gangs, and a considerable number of Beyonder circles. On the other hand, I can take action by myself. I can obtain information from the servants or bodyguards that come out from Capim's villa via mediumship.

After finalizing his plan, Klein was in no hurry to get help from Miss Magician. He decided to try doing it by himself first so that he could find out more about the matter in a targeted manner.

In the blink of an eye, his figure disappeared from the towering palace above the gray fog.

…

After lunch, a man wearing a grayish-black cap and a thick cotton coat cautiously left from the back door of Capim's villa. He walked all the way to a crossroad and got into a rental carriage.

"East Borough." He touched the dark red birthmark on his face and instructed the carriage driver.

The carriage began to move, and the man looked out of the window with a bored expression, admiring the beautiful ladies and young ladies on the streets.

"If only we could kidnap them…" The man let his imagination run wild as he revealed a regretful expression.

When he was far from Iris Street, he suddenly shivered, and his eyes became slightly dazed.

He knocked on the wall and said to the carriage driver, "Stop, stop! I forgot something. Here will do."

The carriage driver didn't dare to reprimand the ferocious man. He didn't even mutter as he stopped the carriage by the side of the street and allowed him to alight.

After paying six pence for the ride, the man retraced the direction in which he came for dozens of meters before entering a cheap hotel.

Without the need for any proof of identity, he paid for a room.

After entering, he left the door ajar without locking it.

Then, the man sat on the edge of the bed with a deadpan expression. Suddenly, a transparent and illusory figure separated from his body!

It was none other than Klein who was dressed as a worker!

He had used the method of summoning himself to transform into a Spirit Body and had attached himself to this man's body, allowing him to walk to a convenient location for mediumship!

After knocking the man out, Klein's spirit form disappeared from the room. Not long after, the door was pushed open, and he walked into the room in his corporeal form.

Using a wall of spirituality to seal the place, Klein quickly set up a mediumship ritual, allowing the alluring scent of Amantha extract and Eye of the Spirit medicine to emanate in the surroundings.

After finishing his preparations and just as he was about to start the mediumship, he suddenly exclaimed and stopped his actions.

He discovered that the Spirit Body of the man who was unconscious on the bed had a mysterious, unknown restriction. If he forcefully did the mediumship, although there was a high probability of success, it would activate the seal and cause some Beyonder to notice this occurrence!

This would end up alerting the enemy!

Such a strange Beyonder power… Very cautious and very careful… What Capim is involved in isn't simple at all… Klein took a few steps forward, frowning slightly.

He glanced at the unconscious man and suddenly chuckled.

"Do you think you can stop me with just this?"

He quickly suspended the ritual, summoned himself again, and responded to himself.

A few seconds later, he flew out of the candle's flame in his Spirit Body form and floated in the room once more.

Without any hesitation, Klein, in his Spirit Body form, suddenly approached and possessed the unconscious man.

The man suddenly sat up and opened his eyes; his expression appeared lifeless.

He straightened his body, walked to the front of the altar, step by step, and then chanted in a low voice, "The Fool that doesn't belong to this era,

"You are the mysterious ruler above the gray fog;

"You are the King of Yellow and Black who wields good luck."

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CHAPTER 376
MR. HARRAS

In a room filled with the ethereal fragrance of Amantha extract and Eye of the Spirit medicine, Capim's henchman, who had been possessed by Klein, was made to chant The Fool's honorific name.

Amidst the monotonous yet rhythmic murmurs and the fragrance that made it difficult to focus, the man's Spirit Body gradually dissipated. He became muddleheaded but maintained a certain degree of unusual lucidity, as if he was hypnotizing himself.

With Klein's "help" in his Spirit Body form and the feedback from the chanting The Fool's honorific name, he slowly entered an "artificial sleepwalking" state. His Astral Projection approached the infinitely high gray fog and the mysterious location above the gray fog.

Klein seized the opportunity, ended the summoning, and returned to the towering ancient palace, where he sat at the seat belonging to The Fool.

He saw a bright light circle rippling around him, sketching out the illusory figure of Capim's henchman. The mysterious space was affected by the ritual as it trembled slightly. Some of the energy was being pried away and was slowly flowing.

Klein picked up the Dark Emperor card, and a paper figurine flashed in his hand.

With a flick of his wrist, the paper figurine flew out and absorbed the sliver of energy that had been pried out of the gray fog. It then transformed into a man wearing a black cap and a thick cotton jacket. He looked identical to

Capim's henchman—even his aura and feel was indistinguishable from the real person.

This paper figurine overlapped with the target's illusory figure and helped him resist the mysterious and unknown restrictions placed within his Spirit Body.

At the same time, Klein held the Dark Emperor card and spread his spirituality, touching the projection of Capim's henchman formed by the pure light.

This was one of the applications of secret deeds, where a weak human and a great being were able to be a little in tune with each other, feeling the corresponding knowledge and gaining a wonderful spiritual experience. Unlike normal circumstances, Klein was playing the role of the great being in this instance.

In this kind of close interactive state that belonged to a secret deed, humans could gain knowledge from great existences, and great existences could also naturally use questions to obtain the information they wanted.

If it wasn't for Klein's inability to master the field of the mind, he would've been able to plant an inducing suggestion.

"What kind of powerful people are in Capim's villa?" Klein asked through the interactive spirituality state.

Without any resistance, the projection transmitted the memories to Klein, making him feel like he was watching a holographic film.

The man in the cap stood respectfully and fearfully in the room. In front of him was a middle-aged gentleman in a black tailcoat and a white wig.

This gentleman had a long, thin, and stern face, and his mouth was naturally pursed, giving off an exceptionally cold feeling.

He followed the golden chain on his watch, took out a pocket watch of the same color, pressed it open to take a look, and then he said in a deep voice, "Look at me."

The man in the cap didn't dare to disobey as he raised his head and looked in front of him.

"Yes, Mr. Harras."

Before he could finish his words, he saw a pair of eyes that flickered with a strange light, and he heard a command: "Maintain secrecy!

"You can't leak anything you see or hear in this villa to anyone else."

The man in the cap trembled inexplicably, feeling that he had to do as the other party had ordered.

He lowered his head again and said, "Yes, Mr. Harras."

…

The man in the cap carried an unconscious girl along the stairs to the entrance of the basement.

There was a small room that was separated from the others, and a bearded man with an unknown age was sitting inside it.

This bearded man had a pair of frighteningly cold blue eyes. He held a thin piece of flannel in his hand and was carefully cleaning the grayish-white rifle on the table.

The rifle was thick and long, connected through a pipe to a large mechanical box of the same color.

It was a high-pressure steam rifle!

That was a military-controlled item!

"Mr. Belize…” The man in the cap bowed his head in greeting.

…

The man in the cap entered a neatly arranged underground structure which resembled a prison. He then locked the unconscious girl in one of the small rooms.

He locked the door, returned to the corridor, and picked up the lantern he had been assigned.

At that moment, he saw a figure slowly approaching from the other end of the corridor.

The figure seemed to be able to see through the darkness without any lighting.

With the aid of the lantern, the man in the cap realized that it was a woman in her thirties.

The woman was wearing a brown bonnet, a thin white blouse, and suspenders, as well as leather boots that reached her knees.

There were old scars on her face and a cruel smile at the corners of her mouth.

The man in the cap lowered his head in fear as he stammered, "Ma'am Katy…”

The woman ignored him. Step by step, she approached him and walked past him, as though he was nothing more than air.

When the lady named Katy had left, the man in the cap curled his lips and said, "Bitch! When you get into bed, you'll definitely be more energetic

than a prostitute!"

He pushed up his crotch, held up the lantern, and left the basement.

…

The man in the cap met two men in the grand hall that shimmered gold.

One of them was about 1.65 meters tall, and he was a little plump. He didn't have any special features, but his eyes always had a frightening look. The other was slightly taller than 1.70 meters, and he looked a bit old. He had some wrinkles and a high nose bridge. His brown eyes were filled with spirit, and he didn't seem to have a look of deterrence.

"Mr. Capim," the man in the cap greeted the plump middle-aged man, then he said to another person, "Mr. Parker…”

…

In the early light of dawn, the man in the cap met the cold middle-aged gentleman called Mr. Harras at the entrance to the basement.

Harras, wearing a white hood, glanced at him, who was standing respectfully by the side. He indifferently stretched out his right palm towards the entrance of the basement and solemnly said, "Confinement!"

Silently, there was a subtle difference in the surroundings.

…

There are a total of four Beyonders. At least four of them… The strongest should be that Mr. Harras, a Sequence 6 at the very least, or maybe even Sequence 5… I wonder what pathway it is. It does seem similar to the Dark Emperor pathway… Relying on order and issuing commands? Judging from the scenes just now, the restrictions pertain only to the basement, not the entire villa. That's right. With so many people coming and going during the

day, it would be too troublesome to enter and exit once the restrictions are in place… I wonder if it's the same at night. Klein analyzed the information he had just received and asked again, "What's the overall layout of the villa?"

He quickly received feedback and saw a magnificent hall, a wide dining room, connected corridors, washrooms, and scenes of the basement.

Through them, Klein pieced together in his mind the rough layout of Capim's villa.

Feeling the drain on his spirituality, he asked a final question, "Who are the important figures whom Capim is closely related to?"

The scene in front of his eyes was the magnificent hall from before. Half-naked girls were prostrating themselves while serving the guests drinks, letting them abuse them or fool around with them; otherwise, they were being dragged directly to a secluded spot to be ravaged.

They were young, and their faces were bitter and numb. Any slight delay or lack of enthusiasm would result in them being whipped by Capim's attendants or maidservants.

None of these servants showed a shred of sympathy despite seeing such evil scenes. They fought to be the first to showcase themselves in a bid to obtain rewards.

Klein saw Capim among the guests, the cold Mr. Harras, and a Member of Parliament from the House of Commons who often appeared in the newspapers, Vardera, a fat man who was addressed as Deputy Chief…

…

Is that one of the Deputy Chiefs of the Backlund Police Department? That's one of the higher-ups of the police department… To think that not a single one of those servants are good… That's understandable. The villa's hired

personnel must've been screened before and would have to be sufficiently trustworthy.… Klein rubbed his forehead, halting the secret deed ritual. The man in the cap was only an inconsequential leader, and that was all he could know or participate in.

Even at this moment, the mysterious restriction on him was still unperturbed.

Klein ended the ritual and allowed him to vanish from above the gray fog as he returned to the real world.

He sat by the bed and looked at the man in the cap who was unconscious. According to the information he had just gathered, he analyzed the feasibility of a performance and considered one plan after another.

In the end, Klein came up with a definite idea. He whispered to himself, *Perhaps, I don't need a helper… *

A helper would drag me down instead, making it inconvenient for me to escape in times of danger.

Picking the right time is very important.

…

Nearly fifty minutes later, the man in the blackish-gray cap appeared in East Borough as he headed straight for the streets controlled by the Zmanger gang.

As soon as he saw a few dark-skinned, lean people with ferocious looks, he immediately went close. Pretending to not watch where he was going, he bumped into one of them.

"Damn it! You bunch of trash!" the man in the cap cursed loudly and punched at one of them.

Highlanders, who loved to fight, didn't back down and entered a brawl with him.

In the process, the man in the cap pulled out his dagger, and the other highlanders also drew their weapons.

Slash!

During the battle, a dagger stabbed into the capped man's neck as he failed to dodge in time. It went right into his arteries.

The man in the cap fell as red blood pooled around his head.

He quickly lost his life, and the illusory, transparent figure within his body immediately vanished.

Klein returned above the gray fog, and using it as a springboard, he re-entered his body. He then opened his eyes in the cheap hotel in Cherwood Borough.

He cleaned up the rest of the evidence and went to the front desk to check out of the room.

On his way back to Minsk Street, Klein once again went above the gray fog.

He wanted to divine a simple but crucial piece of information!

He picked up a fountain pen and wrote down a line of text: "Capim's dinner time today."

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CHAPTER 377
CAPIM'S DINNER

Putting down his dark red fountain pen, Klein picked up the piece of paper with the divination statement and leaned back in his chair.

His lips moved as he whispered, "Capim's dinner time today," over and over again.

Klein's voice echoed above the empty gray fog as his eyes rapidly turned dark, and his eyelids drooped.

In a fragmented dreamscape, he saw the spacious, elegant dining room where there was gilded porcelain cutlery, caviar, roasted chicken, lamb stew, fried rib eye steak, deep-fried Dragon-Bone Fish, thick creamy soup, and so on.

The food was placed in a certain order according to specific requests in front of several diners. Among them was the slightly plump Capim; the middle-aged gentleman in a white hood, Harras; the thin-bloused Katy; and Parker, whose face was rather unintimidating due to his old age.

Looking out from the end of the dining table, he could see a window decorated with gorgeous decorations. Outside the window, the clouds were sparse, and the crimson moon was faintly discernible in the air.

Klein opened his eyes and marked the location of the moon in his dream. Using his knowledge in astromancy, he quickly calculated a rough corresponding time.

*It looks like it's from 7:30 to 7:45 in the evening… Considering those few scenes, Capim and the others have already finished more than half their meals, so I can push the time back by another 15 minutes. That way, 7:30 is the best choice… *Klein muttered silently to himself as he interpreted the revelation from his dream divination.

Eating at half past seven was not a rare occurrence. This was even considered mainstream in the Loen Kingdom and even the Northern Continent because many middle-class people—either due to their personal situations or because of low rent—lived in the suburbs and had to commute to work by taking the short-distance steam locomotive. By the time they got home, it was usually after seven in the evening, so it was normal for people to have dinner between 7:30 and 8:00.

Klein had had the same experience in Tingen City, but that was because he had no servants and no housewife. Once the three siblings returned home, they still needed to busy themselves for quite a while before they could enjoy any hot food. It wasn't because they lived far from work.

This was why civilians and the poor often had dinner between 7:30 and 8:00.

As lunch and dinner were separated by quite some time, afternoon tea, which should've belonged to the upper-class citizens, became popular among the middle-class citizens and civilians.

When he finished the interpretation, Klein recalled the revelation he had just received. Klein became acutely aware of a problem: *Where were Capim's wife and children?*

They didn't appear in the dining room… Is Capim an extreme believer in the Lord of Storms, so his wife and children have to eat their meals in the activity room? Or is there another reason? Or could he be unmarried and childless? He's already a middle-aged man… Klein tried to divine the situation, but he failed to receive any effective revelations, so he gave up.

7:30. He repeated the time once more before returning to the real world.

…

In the evening, even at home, Capim, who was wearing a formal bow tie, narrowed his eyes and looked at his subordinates before him. He asked in a slow but chilling voice, "Fabian is dead?"

"Yes, Boss." Even though he had been working with Capim for many years, his subordinate still felt fear and horror.

"Odysseus, call me Mister. Mister. In a few years, you'll have to call me Sir Capim." Capim loosened his bow tie and casually handled a thick cigar. "When did Fabian die? How did he die?"

"This afternoon, I sent him to East Borough to do something. He ended up in a conflict with the Zmanger gang and got stabbed in the neck…" Odysseus described in a trembling voice.

Capim, who was toasting the cigar, said in an unperturbed tone, "Fabian is really a fool.

"But are the Zmanger gang fools to not know that he's my subordinate?"

"Mister, as you know, highlanders often join the Zmanger gang when they arrive in East Borough, and they're barbaric and reckless, and they don't give a shit who's who," Odysseus quickly explained.

Capim snorted.

"Have they forgotten that this isn't the highlands? Or have they forgotten who I am?

"Odysseus, I want the body of the Zmanger gang's leader from that block. Can you do it? If you can't, I'll sink your wife, your child, as well as you into the Tussock River."

"Mister, no problem!" Odysseus immediately raised his voice.

He immediately asked in a low voice, "Who can I mobilize?"

Capim was about to reply when the door suddenly opened and the middle-aged gentleman with a white wig, Harras, walked in.

He gave Odysseus a cold glance before casting his gaze onto Capim.

"I heard that one of your subordinates had a conflict with a gang in East Borough and ended up dying?"

"Yes, Mr. Harras." Capim stood up, cigar in hand.

Harras stared into Capim's eyes and said, "You want revenge on them?"

Capim's forehead suddenly dripped with beads of sweat.

"No, not at all. Mr. Harras, you misunderstand."

Harras nodded slightly. "You have to remember that during this critical period, we have to try our best to not cause any trouble unless necessary."

He paused for a second and observed Capim's reaction.

"You are not the only human trafficker in Backlund. We can support you, but we can also do so for others. You have to remember this point.

"The reason why I picked you was because you were vicious and shameless enough. However, you were extremely cautious. It wasn't because you were the biggest human trafficker."

From the side, Odysseus listened to the duo's conversation. He wished that he was just a mass of air. That way, he didn't need to see how humble his boss, Capim, was.

Without a trace of anger on his face, Capim smiled and said, "Mr. Harras, my main concern is that Fabian's death isn't simple. It might disrupt your plans."

"No, there's nothing wrong with his death," Harras said in an affirmative tone. "I didn't get any feedback."

"Is that so…" Capim acted enlightened. "Then I'm relieved."

He looked at Odysseus and signaled him to leave. He then lowered his voice and said, "Mr. Harras, this time, there are the kind of goods you like from this batch."

Seeing Harras's expression soften but not show any signs of emotion, Capim quickly added, "We've already finished gathering the ones that will be sent over."

Harras nodded slowly.

"Send her to my room tonight."

"Yes, Mr. Harras!" Capim said with a big smile.

After Harras left, his face turned gloomy. He took a deep breath and whispered, "I hope that you can keep your promise this time… I don't want to be involved in anything like that anymore!"

He clearly remembered that year during the Harvest Festival—someone had come to him, hoping to get a batch of innocent girls.

From that day on, the trajectory of his life had undergone tremendous changes. He had taken a fifth of the market share of the unlawful slave trade.

He quickly became one of Backlund's rather famous tycoons, acquainting himself with several important figures and dragging them into the abyss of

depravity.

At this point, he desperately wanted to cover up the sins of his past. He wanted to let "Capim" undergo a catharsis, allowing him to become a true member of the upper-class. However, for the time being, he was unable to do so.

Glancing at the cigar in his hand, he picked up the framed photograph of himself with a beautiful woman and two children.

Rubbing the surface of the photo frame with his thumb, Capim narrowed his eyes and whispered to himself, *After this deal, you should be able to return…*

At dinner time, Capim walked out of his study, a warm smile plastered over his face again.

"Ma'am Katy, there's your favorite caviar and a roast chicken specially prepared for you this evening," he said to the woman in the thin blouse.

Katy touched the old scar on her face and nodded without saying a word.

Capim knew that she was silent and fierce, so he didn't continue. He watched her as she took her seat.

Then Harras, wearing a white wig, entered the dining room, nodding slightly to each of the diners.

The elderly Parker took a sip of his pre-meal wine, smiling as he motioned for Capim to sit down.

The white napkins were spread out, and the food was served one by one. Capim raised his glass and chuckled.

"Holy Lord of Storms, let's toast to a beautiful future."

"To a beautiful future," Parker responded.

Harras didn't say a word. He merely held the wine glass in his hand and made a gesture. Katy completely ignored them.

At this moment, the classical clock hanging in the hall read 7:23.

…

In a cheap hotel in the Backlund Bridge area.

The disguised Klein took out his golden pocket watch, looked at the exact time, then he took out Holy Night Powder, and he sealed the room with a wall of spirituality.

After doing that, he quickly set up an altar and conducted a ritual.

"I!"

"I summon in my name:

"The Fool that doesn't belong to this era, the mysterious ruler above the gray fog; the King of Yellow and Black who wields good luck."

…

When the ritual was over, Klein immediately took four steps counterclockwise and went above the gray fog, ready to respond to himself.

Inside the towering and solemn palace, he saw the Door of Summoning condensed by rippling light. It was a pair of illusory doors that opened outwards, covered with mysterious symbols.

Klein was in no hurry to be summoned. Instead, he took out the Sun Brooch and other mystical items, and he absorbed them into his Spirit Body according to his plan.

Finally, he picked up the Dark Emperor card and let his Spirit Body envelop it.

All of a sudden, Klein felt as if his Spirit Body had turned corporeal with flesh and blood. It was as if he could lift a gun and move a table and chair!

A dark and ethereal mist rose up around him, and as the mist clung onto the surface of his body, it formed an imposing set of armor.

He had a black crown on his head and a long cape of the same color on his back.

At that moment, Klein was like an emperor about to embark on a journey.

Dark Emperor.

He examined the purifying bullets and revolver that he didn't bring with him before taking a step forward and entering the crack on the illusory door.

Leaping out of the candlelight, he immediately flew under the cover of the night towards Capim's villa on Iris Street in Cherwood Borough.

Not long after, he floated in front of the artificial fountain and approached the villa's entrance at a relaxed pace. The patrolling guards passed by him, but they didn't have any reaction. Since it wasn't really late into the night yet, there were no Beyonders on guard outside.

In addition, Klein wasn't afraid that the powerful Beyonders inside would notice and have a premonition.

It was because the Dark Emperor card possessed anti-divination and anti-prophecy characteristics!

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CHAPTER 378
THE SHOW BEGINS

With a black crown and a solid suit of armor, Klein stood in the doorway, attuned himself for a few seconds, and took a step forward.

His seemingly physical body silently passed through the door and entered Capim's villa.

The first thing that met him was a spacious hall with lots of chairs and clothes racks, and behind it was a magnificent hall with gold as the main color theme.

There was no ceiling, only a dome reaching three-stories high. A giant crystal chandelier hung down, and on each "petal" was a pearly-white candle.

Through a thick, heavy door to the left of the hall was an elegant and exquisite dining room. The fragrance of roasted meat was the richest inside, concealing the smell of alcohol and other food.

Klein was in no hurry to enter the dining room. He partially circled the exterior first, occasionally reaching out his hand to pull on the grayish-white gas pipes. It appeared as if he was experimenting with his physical strength, after carrying the Dark Emperor card, to see how much of an impact he had on the real world.

While he was a Seer and Clown, Klein's Spirit Body only had an intuition ability that was separate from divination. He possessed only two spell-like powers, which were to directly attack the soul and to freeze the target through contact. Once he advanced to the Magician Sequence, even if Klein

didn't rely on the Beyonder powers of his physical body, he could still use Paper Figurine Substitutes and Air Bullets in his Spirit Body state.

In addition, he began to be able to possess others and gain basic control of the target.

Augmented by the Dark Emperor card, the strength of his Spirit Body increased, and the number of items he could carry increased. His spell-like powers, which could directly attack souls, evolved into a Specter's Shriek. It produced sound waves that were inaudible to humans but capable of damaging the souls of all living beings in the area. Similarly, the frozen effects derived from contact was clearly strengthened.

After confirming everything, he found the corner of a wall and penetrated it to enter the dining hall.

Then, suppressing all his emotions, he swept his eyes across the long table.

The scene of Harras in his white wig, Katy in her thin blouse, Parker with his aged face drinking red wine, and the slightly plump Capim slicing his rib eye steak caught his eye.

Klein retracted his gaze quickly, not daring to look too much, lest the few Beyonders would discover him via their spiritual perception.

With the help of the spiritual glows from the male and female servants standing around him, that is—the color of their auras, he carefully circled around the dining room and figured out the exact layout. For example, the size of the dining room was equivalent to the total area of his living room, dining room, and activity room. Another example was that there was a fireplace that burned with charcoal. It warmed the entire room via a pipe. There were sixteen elegant gas lamps, and their lighting mixed together, making the room appear like it was daytime. Across from the fireplace was a wall which had hanging picture frames. There were sketches and oil paintings, all works of famous artists.

That bearded Belize isn't here. He should be changing shifts at the basement… For a Beyonder to be willing to do such menial work, Capim is definitely not involved in a simple matter of human trafficking… Klein thought for a few seconds, then he leaned against an oil painting of the sunset. He reached his hand into his body and unscrewed a translucent brown bottle's cap.

It was the Biological Poison Bottle!

The reason why he paid so much attention to the time and chose to arrive at dinner time was because, at this very moment, the main figures were gathered here in the most orderly manner. It was the most advantageous for him to use the Biological Poison Bottle!

And with the tightly shut doors and windows during early winter, it allowed the effects of Biological Poison Bottle to be more effective and have faster effects!

In addition, Klein didn't soak the Biological Poison Bottle to concoct the "prophylactic" drug before he came. He was currently in his Spirit Body state, so he wasn't afraid of biological poisons!

With his Spirit Body's concealment and containment, he stood there silently and patiently admiring each and every one of the elegant wall lamps which were connected to the grayish-white gas pipes. Quickly, the odorless poison swiftly emanated outwards.

…

Harras, with his white wig, sliced up a deep-fried Dragon-Bone Fish, dipped it in black pepper sauce, and stuffed it into his mouth.

Chewing and swallowing, he picked up the faintly golden champagne that was bubbling like a string of beads and took a sip in a good mood.

He couldn't help but think of the entertainment that he would be experiencing that evening—the joy of a stubborn girl being conquered by him.

This affected his appetite and made him unable to concentrate.

Katy didn't get the servant to help her slice the roasted chicken. She was burying her head, holding a knife and fork, and like doing a precise dissection, she quickly divided the chicken into several pieces. They were all almost the same size.

As Parker sampled the red wine and ate the stewed lamb, he would occasionally chat with Capim, who was sitting at the head of the table, and was considered as a guest that didn't sully the title.

The dinner proceeded in an orderly manner, and finally, Capim put the last piece of beef into his mouth.

He smiled at the three Beyonders and said, "Mr. Harras, Ma'am Katy, and Mr. Parker, tonight's desserts are from La Borrega's head chef. There are three kinds—fruit caramel pudding, cream shortcake, and the carrot cake."

Harras, who had always been cold, nodded slightly.

"We love dessert so much in this country."

As soon as he finished his reflection, he saw Capim raise his hand and scratch his cheek before scratching again.

"It's a little itchy." Capim smiled apologetically.

Before he could finish his sentence, he couldn't help but scratch one more time, leaving a clear bloody mark on his face.

The bloody mark quickly swelled up, and his skin turned translucent. One could even see yellowish pus inside.

"It's really a bit itchy." Capim smiled again.

He scratched the original spot again, but due to using excessive force, the swelling caused the translucent skin to split open, and pus with a nauseating smell sprayed out.

Harras narrowed his eyes and shot to his feet, looking around warily.

"Hahaha."

"Haha. Hahaha."

At that moment, he heard exaggerated laughter, and his body suddenly tensed up.

He saw a male and female servant holding onto their bellies, laughing out loud. They laughed so much that they couldn't even straighten their backs. Tears flowed out from their laughter, their laughter caused the room to turn completely silent.

Like a chain reaction, the rest of the servants fainted or vomited yellow-green liquid continuously without end.

None of them were spared.

Bam! Katy flipped the dining table, letting the gold-plated cutlery and leftover food and wine to spill onto the floor.

She had a revolver and a soft black whip in her hands.

Parker stood up as well, but his mind appeared adrift. He looked at Capim crying miserably for help as he kept scratching and forcefully tore off a few pieces of flesh. For some baffling reason, he felt that the other party's ugly and disgusting appearance was quite the fine sight.

At that moment, Harras realized that he was a little out of breath and realized that the room was probably filled with poison.

He growled, "Hold your breath!

"Parker, open the door.

"Katy, follow me to find the intruder!"

At this moment, Harras was grateful that the dinner had been enjoyed with Capim, and there were quite a few attendants around.

These ordinary people's ability to resist poison was far inferior to Beyonders. The fact that they showed signs ahead of time had allowed them to detect that something was amiss even before the poison had reached the deepest part of their bodies!

Parker, who has the lowest Sequence, should be the one with the most severe symptoms among us… Harras suddenly had this thought.

Creak!

As Parker opened the door to ensure that the dining room was no longer sealed, Harras, relying on his Spirit Vision, discovered an illusory figure quietly fleeting around.

The figure wore a thick and imposing black armor, and a pitch-black crown on his head. A mask of the same color covered his face, making him look like a king from the spirit world.

It was none other than Klein.

Harras raised his right hand and pointed at the black figure that couldn't be seen by ordinary people. He chanted in ancient Hermes, "Imprison!"

All of a sudden, the black figure's surroundings turned viscous, as though it had transformed into a giant amber or produced a sealed, transparent wall.

The figure was rooted to the spot, hardly able to move. Katy had taken aim long ago, and she pulled the trigger. They worked well together.

With two bangs, the light golden bullet, filled with strange patterns, penetrated the viscous air and hit the black figure.

The bullet pierced through and struck the wall opposite. The black shadow self-ignited, reduced to a roughly cut paper figurine.

Within the pale golden flames, the paper figurine was quickly reduced to ashes.

Pa!

With a strange, crisp snap, the light from the sixteen elegant gas lamps and the fire burning quietly in the fireplace suddenly lit up, leaving Harras, Katy, and Parker with only a brief flash of red before their eyes.

Soon after, all the flames were extinguished, leaving the dining room illuminated via the human-height street lamps outside the window and the crimson moonlight shining through the layers of clouds. It made the place abnormally dark and silent.

Harras and the others once again relied on their Spirit Vision and spiritual perception to search for the ghostly intruder.

At the same time, he realized that the poison wasn't showing its effects fast enough. It wouldn't really flare up until he finished the enemy.

Therefore, he paid attention to the movement at the entrance of the basement. He pointed at the door again and said in ancient Hermes, "Confinement!"

The entire dining room suddenly froze, as if there was an additional layer of an invisible wall that even Spirit Bodies couldn't penetrate.

Harras wanted to make it impossible for the intruder to escape!

*I've found you! *Wielding the revolver in one hand and the whip in the other, Katy noticed a black figure floating in the air.

A strange light flashed in her eyes, and before she could attack, her mind buzzed as if someone had struck her head with a wooden stick.

She felt as if she had encountered an indescribable shriek. A few drops of sticky blood slowly dripped from the tip of her nose.

Harras only felt slight dizziness while the symptoms of shortness of breath seemed to worsen. Parker, the weakest of them, was seeing stars, and his steps became unstable.

Suddenly, someone patted Parker's shoulder.

A cold and gloomy feeling gushed over, causing him to freeze on the spot. It was as if he was completely covered in ice, and the cold moisture seeped into his bones. A familiar, deep voice sounded in his ears.

"Imprison!"

Parker was instantly trapped by the transparent wall that imprisoned the door. However, Klein didn't possess him and went straight through instead, avoiding the effects of Harras's spell in a timely manner.

Harras narrowed his eyes and waved his right hand.

"Release!"

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CHAPTER 379
MAGIC'S KEY SEGMENT

The invisible prison around Parker's body immediately collapsed, leaving not even a single trace of it behind.

However, he didn't regain his mobility. Instead, he slumped to the ground, shivering continuously, as if he was still frozen.

This wasn't only an aftereffect of Soul Touch, but also the effect of Klein's direct attack on his soul.

Parker, who was only a Sequence 8, was unable to recover in a short period of time. He couldn't even control his breathing and, as a result, inhaled large quantities of the biological poison, which was identical to the one in his body, once again.

His weakened state caused the poison in his body to act faster. His eyes stared blankly as he instinctively changed direction.

He saw Capim rolling on the ground and scratching his face and body constantly. He saw the thin strips of flesh hanging by the side of the wounds and the ghostly white color of his bones.

Parker gasped and struggled to climb over.

Capim, whose itch made him rip off the outer layer of his skin, suddenly discovered that Parker was crawling toward him with bloodshot eyes. He had a bad premonition, but he had no strength to dodge as he couldn't stop scratching. He didn't even have the ability to shout "no," except for using a blood-curdling cry as a substitute.

At this moment, Klein, who had dodged the "Imprison" spell, shouted "Holy" in ancient Hermes. Then, he rubbed his fingers together and shot an Air Bullet through the dark golden Sunbird brooch's coruscating glow.

As soon as the Air Bullet was formed, it took on a holy luster and shot straight towards Harras's face.

This was the Holy Oath provided by the Sun Brooch, and Klein had augmented the Air Bullet with Holy damage!

Harras had long since changed his position. He was abnormally agile, and unlike a mage, he was more like a pugilist expert.

As he avoided Klein's Air Bullet, he motioned for Katy to lash her whip to hold Klein back.

When Klein's attack was interrupted, Harras took an iron-black metal glove from a hidden pocket of his and tried to put it on his left hand.

In his Spirit Body state, Klein didn't need to look out from the corner of his eye to see what had just happened despite not facing Harras. He immediately flew up, avoiding Katy's lash. He flew over the chandelier and pounced towards Harras.

When Harras saw this scene, he held the black metal glove and pointed diagonally upwards.

"Exile!"

Klein was suddenly hit by an overwhelming and invisible force. His entire Spirit Body was blown away by the wind and hit the wall, the wall conjured by "Confinement," but didn't penetrate through it and escape.

Seizing this opportunity, Harras put on the iron-black metal glove.

In the blink of an eye, he seemed to grow a bit taller. His authority was uplifted like he was a figure that could determine the life and death of others.

The moment Klein was released from the "Exile" state, he felt an inexplicable sense of horror. He couldn't help but want to lower his head, to prostrate, to listen to Harras's every word and obey every order given by him!

His movements had become sluggish, and his pupils reflected a rapidly approaching Katy.

Pa!

Katy lashed out with her long black whip and hit Klein accurately.

The long whip passed through his Spirit Body, but it brought a great deal of pain to Klein's psyche, as if someone had pressed a red-hot iron to the weakest part of his body.

He jerked his head up and let out a scream.

As for Katy, she pulled the trigger of the revolver in her other hand.

Bang! Bang!

Two bullets, with a light golden glow, shot out one after another, striking Klein's body.

Bright rays of light bloomed, and the figure wearing black armor rapidly thinned, turning into a paper figurine and quickly burning into ashes.

Klein appeared in a dark corner, the Sun Brooch inside his Spirit Body was glowing with a dark golden light.

Warm powers instantly filled his body, and the extreme horror that Harras had subjected him to quickly disappeared.

One of the spell-like effects of the Sun Brooch was Horror Immunity!

In the short span of less than a minute, Klein had already been forced to use Paper Figurine Substitutes twice.

Although it was partly because he did it on purpose, it was still enough to prove the strength of Harras and Katy's joint attacks. It was enough to confirm the divination outcome which Klein had received.

This operation would be quite dangerous!

If Parker hadn't been temporarily crippled by the effects of the Biological Poison Bottle and his initial surprise attack, the situation would've been even more dangerous.

His plan was to rationally give up if all four paper figurines were used up and his opportunity had yet to appear. It wasn't because Klein didn't wish to prepare more substitutes, but because his spirituality could only afford four times while in combat.

As for the "Confinement" effect that Harras had created, Klein wasn't worried at all. He was now a Spirit Body that had been "summoned." As long as he ended the "summoning," he would immediately return above the gray fog. Unless it was intercepted by powers at the level of deities or the special effects of Sealed Artifacts at Grade 0 or Grade 1, nothing could interrupt this process.

Previously, when Klein went to the Royal Museum to steal the Dark Emperor card, the woman who was suspected of being a High-Sequence Beyonder was unable to stop him from leaving.

This was the main reason why Klein dared to challenge the impossible even though he knew that the danger was great!

Seeing that the enemy was no longer horrified, Harras put on his black metal gloves and signaled Katy to hold Klein back. He then pointed forward and solemnly said, "Specters and wraiths are prohibited here!"

Klein's body that was covered in black armor immediately trembled as he was strongly repelled by a powerful, invisible force.

However, the level of the Dark Emperor card was extremely high, causing the level of the Spirit Body to be relatively high as well. This kind of influence that was directly aimed at a particular existence was quickly suppressed.

Harras narrowed his eyes, feeling that the intruding specter was very strange.

He saw that Klein easily escaped Katy's intervention via flight, so he pushed his palm forward again and announced in ancient Hermes, "Flying and floating are prohibited here."

All of a sudden, Klein felt his body become heavy, and he plummeted from midair to the ground. Katy quickly rushed over, and with a flick of her wrist, she lashed out with the whip that directed torture on the mind and soul.

She still had many Beyonder bullets on her, but there were fewer than three that were targeted for specters and wraiths. Therefore, she temporarily gave up on using the revolver and only relied on her auxiliary weapon.

Klein rolled on the ground, skilfully dodging Katy's whip. He heard the crack of the whip as it hit the ground.

Katy was about to sweep the whip when she felt an itch at her throat. She coughed twice and missed the opportunity to continue her relentless attack.

This was a sign of the poison acting up!

Harras took a deep breath, held his breath once more. He folded his wrist, pointed to himself, and said, "Disciplinary target: wraiths and specters!"

The surface of his body immediately emitted a light as bright as the morning sun. Even his fist began to shine with lustrous brilliances.

Bam!

The marble under Harras's feet cracked soundlessly, and his tall, thin body pounced swiftly and fiercely, allowing him to immediately close in on Klein.

At this moment, he looked even more like a knight than Katy!

*Bam! *He threw a punch forward, and the air seemed to explode. However, Klein had pulled back ahead of time, dodging the punch with the wind.

Pow! Katy helped from the side and lashed out with her whip in the direction in which her enemy was dodging.

This forced Klein to have no choice but to roll again and again. He took on a fighting stance while keeping an eye out for Harras's spell-like "Imprison."

As lashing sounds echoed, Harras kept attacking while Katy aided him from the side. In less than two minutes, Klein was forced into an unavoidable situation. Even rolling was of no use.

Pa!

Katy's black whip lashed out at Klein's face, and he was only able to take one step sideways before being hit in the arm.

That piercing pain attacked his psyche once again, causing him to freeze on the spot. Even his Spirit Body became somewhat thinner.

Seizing this opportunity, Harras clenched his left fist and solemnly declared, "Death!"

His body then merged with some sort of strange force, creating an obvious afterimage as he slammed into Klein.

Schwing!

The figure covered in black armor instantly broke into pieces, turning into pieces of paper that fluttered in the air like a butterfly.

Klein had expended his third paper figurine!

Harras's gaze swept across the room and quickly locked onto the enemy that had appeared in the corner. He sneered and said, "Let me see how many substitutes you have left!"

In the process of searching for the enemy, he discovered that Parker was squirming on top of Capim. The scene was bloody and disgusting. It was a repulsive sight, both terrible and horrifying.

However, Harras didn't have the luxury of time to save his subordinate. He was well aware that the effects of the poison would only worsen over time, so he had to get rid of the enemy as quickly as possible, so he couldn't be distracted.

If he didn't, he would have to leave the dining hall first to recover from the poison; thus, allowing the enemy to escape without getting any useful information.

He signaled Katy to go forward again, so as to hold back Klein, who couldn't fly or float. He took a breath and tried to catch a breather.

There's a strange smell in the air… This is probably a result of the increasing toxicity of the poison… This thought flashed through Harras's mind, but he didn't think too much about it.

He raised his left hand and solemnly declared, "The illegal intrusion of another's house is a crime!

"An illegal intrusion…”

While repeating the statement for a second time, Harras found it hard to breathe again. For a moment, he was unable to catch his breath, so he could only stop midway.

He took another deep breath, adjusted himself, and spoke again.

"The illegal intrusion of another's house is a crime!

He repeated it three times, and Klein, who was still unable to extricate himself from Katy's entanglement, felt a baffling chill.

Cough! Cough! Cough!

Katy showed coughing symptoms again, and the flailing of her whip became sluggish.

Klein took the opportunity to stop the embroilment with her, but he didn't attack her. Instead, he raised his head, opened his mouth, and let out a sharp cry that no human could hear!

Hum! Katy's head jerked up, and her body swayed. She felt like the ground was bobbing up and down.

Harras only felt a slight dizziness before returning to normal. He looked at Klein coldly and said in a majestic voice, "The guilty should be restricted!"

Klein, who was lunging at him, found to his surprise that his feet had seemed to be immobilized by invisible shackles. It made his movements suddenly turn rigid.

Katy, who had recovered a little, swung open the revolver's cylinder and quickly removed the spent and unused rounds.

Then, she took out a quick reloading device and stuffed six rounds of ammunition, including her remaining purifying bullets, into the cylinder.

Harras clenched his left fist and prepared for an attack.

He wanted to chain his attack with Katy's shooting, in a bid to completely finish the enemy or to expend his substitutes.

At this moment, the black-armored Klein smiled.

It was because the opportunity he had been waiting for had come!

He knew that it would take time for the Biological Poison Bottle to show any significant effects. And once Beyonders sensed that something was wrong, they would act accordingly, either to find the hidden enemy or to escape the toxic environment. It would be difficult to seriously damage them or even finish them. Therefore, he had two other reasons for using the Biological Poison Bottle.

The first reason was to weaken the enemy.

The second reason was to mask some smells so that Harras and the others would attribute all the abnormal smells they detected to the poison in the air. It made them focus all their attention on this aspect.

This was the most important segment of a "magic show" and also the key to success or failure.

That abnormal smell was the smell of gas!

The reason why Klein let the gas lamp and the fire in the fireplace suddenly brighten and extinguish wasn't solely to affect Harras and company's vision.

It was mainly to attract their attention, so that he could destroy a few hidden gas pipes!

In the beginning, he had intentionally put himself in danger in order to trick Katy into firing a bullet meant for wraiths and specters, so that she would no longer blindly fire at him and not trigger a corresponding explosion!

He kept entangling himself with her and hadn't made any other attempts solely because he was waiting for the air to be filled with gas!

Therefore, he kept holding back from using Flaming Jump or Flame Controlling!

As for Harras's actions of using Confinement on the room, he had expected it, but he didn't expect it to be this successful. Therefore, before he entered the dining room, he had kindly inspected the doors and windows to see if they were airtight. He had destroyed the hidden gas pipes in the hall, causing the area—both inside and outside—to become a huge "bomb." Even without Confinement, it would ultimately not affect anything!

As a "specter," Klein was undoubtedly unafraid of explosions!

Lower-level ghosts might be annihilated by fire, but "specters" would at most suffer some damage. This was why Klein had to buy extra purifying bullets and the Sun Brooch despite the fact that he had Flame Controlling.

When he saw that Katy had raised her revolver and was about to shoot, and that Harras was about to pronounce "Death" on him, Klein smiled and snapped his fingers.

Harras suddenly felt a dangerous foreboding.

However, at this moment, he saw that a flame had already lit up in the fireplace to his side, instantly igniting the surrounding air.

BOOM!

With a loud boom, Harras's vision was instantly filled with an inferno that filled the room. It was as if he was watching a grand display of fireworks.

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CHAPTER 380
CURTAIN CALL

Capim lay flat on the ground, itching and aching, wishing he could tear himself apart on the spot to rid himself of this hellish pain.

Then, he saw a scarlet wave of fire that spread over in a flash, and he heard a deafening explosion.

He imagined that this last moment would seem infinitely long and that it would allow him to recall all of the beautiful scenes when his wife and children were still by his side. He thought that he would feel relieved because he would no longer have to endure this inhuman torture, but at that moment, extreme fear and an intense desire to live surged from the bottom of his heart. And the so-called memories didn't even flash past his mind before he was overwhelmed by an excruciating pain before being plunged into deep darkness.

Boom!

The dining room windows were blasted apart, accompanied by countless brick fragments and rubble, as well as the burning tongues of fire that kept reaching outwards.

The guards patrolling this area were immediately knocked over. Those who were lucky enough to not get hit had their ears left ringing. Their bodies either swayed, staggered, or fell.

They saw that more than half of the dining room's outer wall had collapsed and that the flames seemed to be floating in midair.

The residents of the entire street and the police officers in charge of the surrounding area heard a loud boom at the same time, leaving them confused and frightened.

In the dining room, dressed in black armor and a black crown, Klein stood there, bathing in the red flames and enjoying the strong blasts of the waves without flinching.

A lot of the black gases around him had dispersed, and even his Spirit Body had suffered some damage, but it wasn't serious at all.

Beside a toppled table, Parker and Capim were blasted into a corner, their heads were cracking and their bodies charred.

The surface of their bodies was still quietly burning with flames, and the rest of the servants were in a similar state.

In the area opposite the fireplace, Katy, who had been unable to avoid the attack in time, was slammed into the wall and then fell to the ground. Her body was mangled and covered in blood, and there were a lot of charred marks on her skin. Not a single piece of her skin remained intact.

She wasn't dead yet, but she had fainted from her severe injuries. Even so, she still coughed while convulsing, inhaling large amounts of the lingering flames.

The black whip also suffered similar damage. Many cracks appeared on its surface, and a small portion of the whip was ignited. None of the Beyonder bullets that she possessed were spared from the explosion.

Katy was no longer capable of fighting.

Harras had rolled in time to protect his vitals, but there was still a lot of blood and charred flesh on him.

He staggered to his feet, revealing that his back, his hairband, and his legs were ablaze with red flames.

His breathing became more difficult, and his body suffered relatively severe injuries.

However, this was sufficient to prove the robustness and strength of his body. Or rather, having worn the black iron glove, his body became sufficiently robust, and his physique was sufficiently strong!

However, this was within Klein's expectations.

Since he was unable to assess how much damage his opponent could take, he had overestimated his enemy's constitution while coming up with a plan.

Out of the corner of his eye, Harras saw that Klein was almost perfectly fine. His pupils shrank as he hurriedly stretched out his left hand and pointed in that direction. He said in a low voice, "Exile!"

Again, Klein failed to resist and was pushed away like scrap paper in a hurricane. He flew out of the dining room. In the hall outside, after the momentary ignition, the fire had already weakened. Another wave of disaster was brewing due to the wooden staircase, but the damage here wasn't too severe because the main body of the explosion had been "confined" to the dining room.

Seizing this opportunity, Harras suddenly turned around and ran outside without looking back.

Even though the flames covering his body were still burning, he didn't waste any time to deal with them.

He knew that he was in a terrible condition and on the brink of losing control. Furthermore, the effects of the poison would soon reach its peak. Compounded by these two factors, he didn't think that he had any chance of

defeating the intruder. It would be the same even if he had the help of the Sequence 7, Belize, at the entrance to the basement!

Harras believed that if this battle continued, the only thing that awaited him was having the poison act up or him losing control due to his injuries!

Once he decided to run, he didn't care about Katy, who was still alive, anymore.

When Klein, who had just stabilized his body under "Exile," saw this scene. He immediately raised his head, opened his mouth, and let out a shriek that no human could hear!

Hum!

Harras felt a wave of dizziness, and his feet paused for a moment. His skin, which was still in relatively good condition, was now covered in dense, translucent blisters. This was an early sign of him losing control.

However, he quickly recovered and continued his mad dash, escaping from the lawn of the villa.

He's really hard to kill… Klein didn't pursue him, in order to avoid an accident.

He remembered that his goal was to rescue the victims and not to wipe away these degenerate Beyonders.

More importantly, he had expended a lot of his energy and had suffered heavy injuries. If he were to give chase, he might not be able to stop Harras's berserk counterattack.

Pa!

Klein snapped his fingers and fired an Air Bullet.

The bullet struck Katy in the head, ending her pain.

Immediately following that, Klein turned around and flew towards the entrance to the basement.

Belize, who had a full beard, had been keeping an eye on the situation outside, but he didn't dare to leave his post out of fear that the intruder's accomplices would take the opportunity to break into the dungeon.

At this very moment, he held a high-pressure steam rifle and had his Spirit Vision activated. He had been frightened by the loud boom and became abnormally tense.

Immediately afterwards, he saw the dignified specter fly over, and without hesitation, he raised his rifle and pulled the trigger.

Bang!

White mist was ejected from the barrel, and a sharp-tipped pale-gold bullet was shot forward at an astonishing speed.

Klein was prepared and long had a hunch. He had drawn out a small curve before Belize fired.

The bullet tore through the hall, past the front door, and to the outside.

At the same time, Belize rushed out of the duty room, holding his high-pressure steam rifle and took on a threatening pose as he quickly moved towards the door.

He believed that the intruder, who could deal with Harras, Katy, and Parker, would be able to easily kill him as well. Besides, such a big commotion must've attracted a lot of attention. He couldn't be certain that the Mandated Punishers would come over to investigate. Therefore, his only choice was to flee!

Klein once again let out an invisible shriek, making Belize feel as if he had been smashed by a hammer. He saw stars as a few drops of blood dripped from the tip of his nose.

But this didn't stop Belize from running. After shooting at Klein to stop him, he was already running into the hall, tumbling towards the door.

Klein hesitated for a moment, then he gave up on chasing and fighting. He turned off the main valve, went to the entrance of the basement, and snapped his fingers repeatedly.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Air Bullets shot at the invisible walls, gradually disintegrating the Confinement.

This was also one of the reasons why Klein dared to cause a gas explosion and use the Biological Poison Bottle. With the effects of Harras's Confinement in the underground dungeon, as long as it wasn't a frontal assault, he didn't have to worry about accidentally harming those pitiful girls.

He destroyed the locks and flew into the dungeon, first finding the cell where Daisy had been held based on the revelation from his prior divination scenes. He then confirmed that she wasn't hurt too badly and was still able to move.

Then, his body turned illusory and melted into the metal door.

Creak! Creak! Creak!

The iron doors on one side opened quickly, one after another, as though an invisible specter was running to unlock them.

Creak! Creak! Creak!

After one side was done, he did it for the other side.

Daisy and the other girls were frightened by the explosion outside. After a while, she was surprised to find that the door to her cell was open for some baffling reason. Yet, no one entered. It felt like she could leave at any time.

Some of the girls, who hadn't been disciplined at all since they were recently kidnapped, mustered their courage, got up, and attempted to run to the exit of the basement.

They passed through the hall which was slightly damaged by the explosion, and they left the burning villa's worsening condition, running faster and faster in the direction of freedom.

When they reached the street, Daisy and the other girls thought to look back.

Looking back, they could just barely make out an imposing figure standing upright on top of the evil building. It was clad in full black armor, and it wore a black crown.

Whoosh!

The cape behind the figure began to flutter silently.

As they remembered the scene, they sought a nearby cathedral with their mistrust towards the police.

When Klein returned to the smoky and burning dining room, he found that Parker's and Katy's Beyonder characteristics had just begun to show signs of appearing.

He checked the items they were carrying and confirmed that most of them had been destroyed. Even their money was charred to a crisp.

Klein jumped up to the second and third floor, quickly checking for any relevant clues.

He didn't attempt to use mediumship, because he was short on time. And bringing them above the gray fog didn't meet the requirements of his "curtain call."

*If even a minor leader was made to maintain "secrecy," then these important figures would definitely have their own "restrictions." They aren't good candidates for performing mediumship as I please. Furthermore, the previous series of required actions is too troublesome, complicated, and inappropriate for the current situation that I'm in… *Klein ended his investigation with nothing to show for, but he picked up a deck of tarot cards.

Returning to the destroyed, charred dining room, he took out all the Major Arcana cards from the tarot card deck and walked over to Capim's corpse.

Then, he specially took two of them and scattered the rest over Capim's body.

When this was done, he covered Capim's eyes with the two tarot cards he had specially drawn. They were face up with their main side.

By this time, Parker's and Katy's Beyonder characteristics had appeared.

…

Tens of seconds later, an illusory door covered with complicated symbols appeared in midair outside the villa.

The door opened without a sound, and from it, a handsome man in a crisp suit walked out. He looked to be in his forties—mature and elegant.

He had a pair of golden eyes, and with just one sweep of his face, he locked onto the dining room in the midst of the fire.

At this moment, a strong gust of wind blew past, and a figure flew over at high speeds.

It was an old man wearing a soft hat. His silver eyes had an abnormal seriousness to them. He was wearing a black robe with the symbol of the Lord of Storms embroidered on it. It was none other than the Cardinal of the Church of the Lord of Storms, the Archbishop of Backlund, Spellsinger of God, Ace Snake.

"Why are you here?" Ace asked in a deep voice.

Any Beyonder-related matters in Cherwood Borough came under the jurisdiction of the Holy Wind Cathedral, so he was entitled to ask.

The handsome man's expression turned slightly nasty as he replied, "I live nearby."

They were close to the West Borough.

The two of them didn't speak any further. They landed on the ground at the same time and entered the explosion site. A violent hurricane churned and swept away the flames, sending them to the artificial fountain outside.

The wind seemed to have a life and intelligence of its own.

The two demigod figures then saw Katy, whose head was shot and her flesh charred black, and Parker, who was entangled with someone else while his head had caved in and cracked. They also saw Capim, who was covered in tarot cards, as well as the two Major Arcana cards on the face of the human trafficker.

These were the "Judgment" card which depicted an Angel blowing a great trumpet, and "The Emperor" card which was decked out in armor and was crowned!

Almost at the same time, Cardinal Snake and the handsome man sensed something and turned their heads to look outside.

They discovered a majestic figure in black armor and a black crown located at the top of the house by the side of the villa.

The figure nodded slightly, and his cape was lifted.

Then, without any warning, he disappeared, right under the noses of the two High-Sequence Beyonders.

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CHAPTER 381
CONJECTURES

With a crackle, branched lightning lit up the early-winter night with a silvery-white flash.

It didn't smite the ground, but instead, it tore through the air, illuminating the spot where Klein stood, as if it was daytime, making him stand out.

Spellsinger of God, Ace Snake, retracted his gaze, his face was gloomy as he whispered, "Rose School of Thought?

"It's not a wraith, nor is it an undead creature…”

The mature middle-aged man with a pair of golden eyes turned his head to the side to look at Capim's corpse and said, "Covering the target's corpse with tarot cards…

"This is the second time something like this has happened in the past two months."

"When was the first instance?" Cardinal Snake asked in a deep voice.

The mature middle-aged man in the well-ironed formal suit coughed lightly and said, "The time when the True Creator attempted to descend into this world with the help of a swindler."

"Then it's not the Rose School of Thought." Cardinal Snake made a definite judgment.

Although those organizations that worshiped evil gods weren't fond of anyone, they wouldn't deliberately foil the plans of their counterparts; instead, they wished to see their counterparts succeed, waiting for them to make a mess of the situation.

"I think so too. Perhaps it's the appearance of a new secret organization. Their characteristic feature is to scatter tarot cards all over the target's body." The middle-aged man smiled. "And the different appearance of the tarot cards imply different meanings… This corpse has two cards over his face. One is 'Judgment,' and the other is 'The Emperor."Judgment' is the motive and goal, while 'The Emperor' is the organization's code name? Of course, this might also be a type of ritual."

Cardinal Snake didn't respond as he surveyed the area.

"Let's see what exactly happened here."

It was only at this point in time that the first batch of Mandated Punishers arrived at Capim's villa.

…

Above the gray fog, having only used Paper Figurine Substitutes thrice and not being pushed to his limits, Klein was about to use divination to confirm Daisy's safety afterward.

"Daisy will successfully return home." Holding the spirit pendulum in his left hand, he closed his eyes and silently chanted the sentence.

After repeating it seven times, Klein opened his eyes and saw the topaz pendant turning counterclockwise, but it moved with a very slow frequency and a tiny amplitude.

This means that Daisy's journey home will be quite a bumpy one but almost negligible… After interpreting the revelation, Klein was relieved of his final concerns.

He then looked at the two items in front of him, both of which were radiating with a strong spiritual luster.

One of them was a light blue, translucent hexagonal pillar. There were traces of light flashing through it, as though it was lightning that came from the depths of one's consciousness. This was the Beyonder characteristic left behind by Ma'am Katy.

The other belonged to Parker, who hadn't been able to play a role in the battle. His Beyonder characteristic had condensed into a ball, like a child's fist.

This "fist" was made up of three colors—iron-black and dark red colors intertwined with a large swath of silver.

Klein didn't hesitate to conjure a pen and paper. He was ready to use these two Beyonder characteristics to divine the corresponding potion formulas.

Before he advanced to Sequence 7, because of the additional influences that had been left on the Beyonder characteristics he had, it was almost impossible to use divination to determine the formulas. Even if this mysterious space could help him eliminate the interference and increase his divination ability to a certain extent, it still wasn't enough.

Therefore, the only method Klein could use, in the past, was mediumship.

After he became a Magician, he was preliminarily able to determine it using the Beyonder characteristic for a divination above the gray fog; however, there was a high probability of him failing.

This time, without exception, Klein had shamelessly failed.

However, he also had some gains, and that was to be able to find out the corresponding Sequence names of the two Beyonder characteristics.

Parker is a Sequence 8 Sheriff and Katy is a Sequence 7 Interrogator… Aren't these from the Arbiter pathway? This pathway is controlled by the royal family, the military, and a small number of ancient aristocratic families in Loen. Any leaks of formulas and Beyonder ingredients are dealt with harshly… Could a number of the girls abducted by Capim be sent to the estate of some aristocrat?

But there's no need for them to send four Beyonders to help Capim just to enjoy themselves. It obviously doesn't make sense… Harras is much more powerful than Katy, so perhaps he's a Sequence 6 of this pathway. After wearing that glove, he might even be as strong as a Sequence 5… Could it be that they're involved in some bloody heretic sacrifice, and the target they seek cannot be exposed?

Apart from those on the inside of the Kingdom, Feynapotter's Castiya family also possesses this Beyonder pathway, which is then transmitted to their army and intelligence system… Could this be another espionage case of some unknown nature?

Klein tried to divine a few of his conjectures, but he failed again.

He temporarily put this matter to the back of his mind and lightly tapped the edge of the long bronze table as he muttered to himself, *As long as I have the formula, with the corresponding supplementary ingredients, these two Beyonder characteristics will be able to turn a person into a Sequence 8 Sheriff and Sequence 7 Interrogator… Miss Magician's friend who's called Xio seems to be lacking the Beyonder ingredients for Sheriff…*

I can sell Parker's Beyonder characteristic to Miss Magician through The World so that I can quickly amass the money needed for the ingredients of the Faceless Sequence potion… However, always doing it through The World doesn't seem rather appropriate. I deliberately left the tarot cards this time. If Miss Justice were to hear of this matter, then she would definitely believe that it was done by my adorer… I'll let Mr. Fool do the selling on his behalf…

Klein quickly finalized a plan and made the Sheriff and Interrogator Beyonder characteristics fly to the corner and hid it among the junk pile.

I wonder what the names are for the Arbiter pathway's Sequence 6 and 5… It seems like something that uses order and laws… Judge? Klein put away those thoughts and closed his eyes midway to carefully observe his current state.

Once again, he felt his spirituality become lively as the potion stirred. He felt that his digestion of the potion had sped up.

This time, he had confidence, based on his intuition, that he had concluded most of the "Magician rules." The remaining minutiae were good to have, but it didn't really matter if he lacked them. It didn't significantly affect his digestion process.

Conjuring a fountain pen and goatskin, Klein enhanced his memory by writing:

"The Magician's Rules:

"1. Never perform unprepared.

"2. Challenge the impossible, even if the final outcome is nothing but an illusion."

Klein believed that these were the two core tenets of the "Magician's Rules." Grasping them would be key, and the rest were supplementary for perfection.

"3. Take the initiative to perform.

"4. Try to get applause from the audience.

"5. Wield control of the target's attention."

…

Putting down the dark red fountain pen, Klein skimmed through it and judged them by himself.

Daily "acting," together with three or four proactive "acting" instances would be enough to allow me to digest the Magician potion before new year's. If I were to challenge an impossible performance during this period, then my progress would be even faster… This is roughly at the speed I wish to achieve.

There were still about two months till 1 January 1350.

After doing all this, Klein rubbed his temples, prepared to return to the real world.

After putting away the Dark Emperor card, the Biological Poison Bottle, and other items, he suddenly laughed and said self-deprecatingly, "Challenge the impossible… Isn't that equivalent to courting death?"

As his voice echoed, Klein's figure disappeared from the space above the gray fog.

In the cheap hotel in the Backlund Bridge area, he suddenly opened his eyes and saw the candlelight of his summoning ritual.

After quickly clearing up everything, Klein put on a thick worker's jacket he'd bought for 4 soli and went to the window.

He picked up the sweet iced tea that he had bought earlier and looked at his blurry figure which was reflected in the window. There was a heartfelt smile on his face as he whispered, "Cheers."

Just as he finished his sentence, he touched the glass with his cup, then lifted his chin and downed it in one gulp.

Then, he sauntered out of the hotel. The nearby gas lamps were already fully lit up, and pedestrians and carts were bustling about, oblivious to the explosion at the border between the Cherwood Borough and West Borough.

Klein strolled around the Bravehearts Bar for a while, and at 7:58, he knocked on the door of the Beyonder gathering organized by Eye of Wisdom.

He wore an iron mask and a hooded robe, acting completely ordinary.

…

Meanwhile, Xio, who went to various places every night to check on her contacts, saw a sign that had never appeared before.

It belonged to the golden-masked man who had sold the Sheriff's formula to her at the gathering organized by Mr. A.

It was the sign of an emergency meeting!

He hasn't come looking for me all this time, and I've been pretending that it had never happened. Why would he suddenly… Xio thought for a moment before deciding to take a look.

The golden-masked man had promised to give her some missions, allowing her to save enough money and exchange it for the corresponding Beyonder ingredients.

Therefore, Xio switched areas and marked the time and place of the meeting.

Half an hour later, Xio walked out of her hiding place after secretly observing a remote alley that also extended in all directions. She walked towards the golden-masked man.

The man was still wearing his black tuxedo. His light brown eyes swept over Xio's head.

"There's a mission for you."

"Difficulty and compensation?" Xio asked like clockwork.

The man nudged his mask which was forged from gold.

"It's not dangerous, but it can be very dangerous. It all depends on what you do.

"The initial compensation is thirty pounds. If you can acquire useful information, I can even directly give you a Beyonder ingredient corresponding to Sheriff."

"What's the mission," Xio said with a frown.

The golden-masked man's gaze turned heavy as he said, "Through the channels available to you, figure out who has been recently been keeping tabs on Capim."

"Capim? That human trafficker?" Xio returned with a question.

The man nodded.

"Yes."

"I reject this mission. I hate him!" Xio immediately refused.

The man opposite her chuckled.

"You aren't working for Capim.

"Because he's dead."

"Dead?" Xio was instantly stunned.

"He died at home, and his body was covered with tarot cards. There were two cards on his face, one 'Judgment,' and the other 'The Emperor.' By the way, pay attention to matters in the past few years which have involved tarot cards but were not reported to the police," the man added.

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CHAPTER 382
HERO BANDIT

Cherwood Borough, in the house Xio and Fors rented.

Fors was just finishing the beginning of her new book and, in her good mood, prepared to reward herself with a cigarette, when Xio pushed open the door and entered the study.

"Smoking is harmful to your health." Xio sniffed.

Fors didn't argue with her when she saw her puzzled look. Instead, she asked, "Looks like something happened to you?"

Xio scratched her rough blonde hair and sat down on a nearby chair.

"That person from before contacted me—the person who sold the Sheriff formula to me through another person at Mr. A's gathering.

"He gave me a relatively simple mission. The initial reward is thirty pounds. I don't even know if there are any hidden dangers…”

Fors thought for a moment and then said, "That person… There should be an organization behind him, but why would they want to rope you in? Aren't they afraid of being implicated by your intelligence; thus, causing the entire organization to be completely destroyed? There's nothing they really need from you either. Your looks are barely passable, but you're too short, so perhaps your life is relatively more valuable… Eh, what mission is it?"

Xio was used to her good friend's snide remarks as she ignored what she said in the beginning. She directly answered the second question,

"Investigate if there has been anyone keeping tabs on Capim recently."

"Capim? The human trafficker who deserves to be hanged—no, burned to death?" Although Fors wasn't a bounty hunter, it was her writer's instinct to gather material, so she often asked Xio to tell her stories and news she had learned.

Xio nodded. "It's him, but he's already dead. He seems to have died rather miserably."

"How did he die? Was he sliced to death by a knife, bit by bit?" Fors asked, pleased and curious.

"That person didn't go into a detailed description. Perhaps it'll be mentioned in the papers tomorrow." Xio thought for two seconds before continuing, "He only mentioned a rather special situation at the scene of the death. He said that Capim's corpse was covered in tarot cards. His face was covered with the 'Judgment' and 'The Emperor' cards.

"The 'Judgment' card probably meant that it was a judgment on Capim, and the verdict was death. But what does 'The Emperor card' represent? That murderer, no—that hero's identity?" As a best-selling author, Fors instinctively began interpreting the unique layout of the scene of the crime.

Suddenly, she froze.

Tarot cards? The corpse was strewn with tarot cards? Fors suddenly thought of the secret organization she had just joined—Tarot Club!

It couldn't be one of us, could it? However, none of the members has the code name of The Emperor… If it's really the case, then this is the first time I've found traces of the Tarot Club in the real world… We're not just a secret organization that only exists above the gray fog. As Fors's emotions churned, she felt pleasantly surprised and also worried.

…

Under an attendant's lead, Klein entered the familiar activity room.

There was only one candle in the room. The dim yellow light made the surroundings look like a scene from a ghost story. Coupled with the black robes and the iron masks worn by the mysterious people, the atmosphere turned even more intense.

The moment he stepped in, Klein suddenly had a baffling sensation.

He felt the flickering candle flame staring at him.

He felt that the flame would burst and ignite his hair and robe.

He felt that the curtain behind the oriel window would suddenly flare up, enveloping his body, and covering his nose and mouth, forcefully choking him to death.

What's happening? Klein was stunned as he turned extremely tense.

It wasn't a premonition for danger, but a feeling that was hard to avoid.

Klein carefully found a seat and sat down.

The moment his buttocks touched the surface of the chair, he felt as if the chair would explode and thick wooden thorns would end up piercing through his body.

This reminded him of the videos he had seen back on Earth—due to the explosion of a low-quality gas cylinder under a swivel chair, the steel pole, and the debris had stabbed into the seated owner's buttocks, drilling into his abdomen. The whole scene was filled with badly mutilated blood and flesh, a ghastly sight.

Why am I always making such bad associations? Is it because of the damage done to my Spirit Body from the battle earlier? Klein looked around thoughtfully and saw that the fat Apothecary had still not attended.

What happened? Or has he already left Backlund? Klein murmured something to himself and heard Eye of Wisdom announce the beginning of the gathering.

In the course of the next few hours, Klein felt as if the chandelier on the ceiling was going to fall sideways and smash into his head. He thought that the coffee table in front of Eye of Wisdom would suddenly move sideways and stumble him over, and he suspected that the members of the gathering around him were full of malice and might cause him trouble at any moment.

It made him fidgety, alert, and puzzled, and he was too distracted to pay attention to deals that either ended in success or failure.

If one is to say that a premonition for danger is like an occasional vibration, reminding one that there's news entering the room or an incoming phone call, then the feeling I have at this moment is akin to an electric drill boring constantly, causing me to be unable to relax or pay attention to anything else… Klein tried to rub his forehead, but it only touched the cold iron mask.

At this moment, he felt as if his iron mask would suddenly cave in and stick close to his face, embedding itself into his brain.

Is it really because my Spirit Body was damaged so it's making me hallucinate? Klein frowned.

He originally wanted to make a request to buy the Thousand-faced Hunter's blood and mutated pituitary gland at this meeting, but in such a situation, he could only give up out of caution.

Although the level of Eye of Wisdom's gathering wasn't high, and there was a high probability that it wouldn't involve a high-level monster like the Thousand-faced Hunter, Klein believed that a lot of the members here also attended other gatherings and might be able to come into contact with the relevant information and clues.

Amidst his anxiety, Klein attended the gathering as a bystander.

Just after taking off his robe, removing his mask, and leaving the room, the feeling that everything in the room was going to harm him had instantly disappeared, disappearing in the oddest manner!

This… Klein's pupils shrank, confirming that his previous experiences didn't originate from the damage to his Spirit Body; otherwise, he wouldn't have experienced two completely different states, inside and outside.

He suspected that there was a person or creature in the activity room of the gathering, one that was invisible, imperceptible, and extremely terrifying. That entity had stimulated his spiritual perception as a Seer and his sense of danger as a Clown, but because of the entity's suppression or some other special reason, this stimulus appeared in the form of a rich association that failed to make him realize it.

Who could it be? This is too scary. Just the existence itself made me have a reaction similar to the symptoms of losing control… Without making a sound, Klein left Eye of Wisdom's house and headed toward the nearest street.

All of a sudden, he had a guess.

The Bravehearts Bar is nearby, and it's also the monitoring area of Wraith Steve, who was killed by Miss Sharron, Maric, and I…

Their deaths would definitely make the Rose School of Thought's High-Sequence Beyonder angry, and he would cast his sights over here, towards the Beyonders living near the Bravehearts Bar…

Was that him?

Fortunately, I used the Biological Poison Bottle and the Sun Brooch tonight, and to prevent myself from being divined, I left them above the gray

fog… Otherwise, the result would be unimaginable… The Magician who just completed an impossible performance would be killed directly here…

The Beyonder world is truly dangerous…

…

Inside the Holy Wind Cathedral, Cardinal Ace Snake looked at the captain of the Mandated Punisher team and asked emotionlessly, "Who is Capim?

"Why is there an underground dungeon in his villa?"

The captain of the Mandated Punisher team replied immediately, "He's a tycoon, one who was rumored to be related to many cases of missing girls. He's suspected of being a human trafficker, and that he is secretly engaged in the slave trade.

"That underground dungeon proves the rumors."

"Why did a human trafficker receive the protection of so many Beyonders? And their Sequences aren't low either," Cardinal Snake pressed.

"Your Grace, this requires an investigation. We tried using Beyonder means to find clues, but all of them failed," the captain of the Mandated Punisher team replied, somewhat trembling in fear.

"I've tried it too," Cardinal Snake didn't blame him.

This member of the Church of the Lord of Storms's upper echelon paused for a moment before continuing, "Continue to investigate this matter. Also, find that Sequence 6 or 5 specter."

After his subordinate had left, Cardinal Snake picked up his fountain pen and wrote down in his notebook a number of subjects to pay close attention to: "Capim, human trafficking, tarot card ritual, strange specter without a high Sequence, concealed plot."

…

In Empress Borough, the opulent villa of Count Hall.

Audrey was waiting for the maid to cut up the food, when she heard her father, Count Hall, who was used to reading the newspapers at breakfast, laugh.

"Capim is dead."

"Who is he?" Audrey asked with her eyes wide open.

In fact, she wasn't the least bit curious about who Capim was. She was simply going along with her father, who obviously had the desire to share his thoughts.

This was both her specialty as a daughter and the innate nature of a Telepathist.

"He's a tycoon who secretly might be a human trafficker. He has rather good ties with some people. Heh…” Count Hall chuckled. "He was killed last night. There were obvious signs of him being judged at the scene of the crime, so the newspapers are calling the murderer a Hero Bandit. The Hero Bandit Dark Emperor. Oh, they named him after the code name of the rulers of the ancient Solomon Empire."

*Hero Bandit? Hero Bandit Dark Emperor? Dark Emperor… *Audrey immediately thought of the Card of Blasphemy belonging to Mr. Fool. This was the item of the highest level she had come into contact with so far.

She suddenly became interested in the Capim murder: "It sounds interesting. Although it's illegal, I still want to say that the Hero Bandit did beautifully. Oh, dad, how did it go?"

"The police and relevant departments of the Church didn't divulge any exact details. I haven't met them either, but this is what's said on the papers. The

Hero Bandit was dressed in black armor and a black crown. He had a cape of the same color behind him. After he entered Capim's villa, not only did he steal all the valuables in the safe, but he even stole the lives of Capim and his evil henchmen, rescuing girls who were locked up in the underground dungeon. He scattered tarot cards on Capim's body, and the most prominent of all were the two cards that covered his face. One of them was 'Judgment' and the other was 'The Emperor.'" Count Hall held the newspaper as he described it with a smile.

Tarot cards…"Judgment" card and "The Emperor" card… Audrey's eyes suddenly lit up.

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CHAPTER 383
RETURNING HOME

Audrey could almost be certain that it had been done by Mr. Fool's adorer when she heard the description of the familiar scene.

She suddenly felt a strong sense of immersion, participation, and pride.

That was a human trafficker whose hands were stained with blood and evil… The "Judgment" card is the retribution enacted against him in the name of justice. Was the verdict hanging, beheading, or burning at the stake? The Emperor should be a symbol of his identity… Was this the adorer who sneaked into the Royal Museum and stole the Dark Emperor card? Audrey let her imagination run wild for a moment.

She had intended to press for more information and finer details, but from the look on her father's face, the tone of his voice, and the color of his emotions, she could tell that he still didn't know what was going on. Therefore, she could only suppress her curiosity and planned on asking her good friend, Kance Leerhsen, from MI9.

Although directly asking Kance about it would suit my image in this aspect, that would still be rather abrupt. It would also conflict with my identity as a noble. Hmm… I'll get Annie to prepare a few invitations for an afternoon tea party, sending them separately to Glaint, Kance, Murray, Christine, Jane, and the others… Most of them are interested in mysticism, so they would feel interested in someone known as the Hero Bandit Dark Emperor. Under my guidance, they can help me ask a lot of questions that wouldn't be convenient for me to ask… It's decided… Audrey retracted her attention and nibbled at her breakfast.

She believed that Mr. Fool's adorers wouldn't have dealt with Capim purely for the sake of punishing evil since it wasn't in line with his identity and status. Of course, if Audrey was still the same Audrey who had just joined the Tarot Club a few months ago, then she definitely would've been willing to accept such an explanation; otherwise, she wouldn't have chosen the Justice card as her symbol.

After experiencing so many gatherings and so many matters, she felt that she had matured a lot and was no longer as innocent. She believed that there had to be more important and essential factors behind this matter, such as an evil god or secret organization which Capim was involved in.

*I hope Kance can provide some useful information, *Audrey thought with anticipation.

…

15 Minsk Street. Klein was eating white bread with jam and flipping through today's newspapers.

"What? A safe?" As he read, he almost choked on his own saliva.

It wasn't me… I didn't… Don't spout nonsense… In his mind, Klein immediately rejected the description of his theft of everything in the safe thrice.

The situation had been pressing, and in order to gain clues, all he did was burrow into the safe to see if there were any important documents or evidence despite having found the safe. He didn't take anything, and he quickly left the safe and went to another room.

Of course, Klein, in his Spirit Body state, had also suffered some damage from the gas explosion, and the total weight of the items he could carry had been greatly reduced. There were only gold bars, jewelry, land deeds, house deeds, antiques, and other items in the safe, which were either not convenient for him to take, or there was no way he could launder them.

Perhaps he has a place reserved especially for cash, but unfortunately, I didn't find it, nor did I have the time to look for it… Klein muttered silently to himself, confirming that it was the subsequent investigators who had divided up all the contents in the safe.

He looked at the newspaper, took a sip of Sibe black tea, and slowly exhaled. He smiled inwardly.

Hero Bandit Dark Emperor… I like that name…

After breakfast, Klein put on his thick double-breasted frock coat and half top hat, and he held a solid black cane. Opening the door, he left Minsk Street for Broken Axe Lane on the boundary of the East Borough.

That was where Daisy had disappeared.

After finalizing his plans yesterday, and before he committed to his operation, he had deliberately made a trip to Broken Axe Lane to seriously look for clues. He knocked on the doors of the nearby houses and asked if they had seen any girls like Daisy.

Although Klein didn't believe that the official Beyonders would think that a poor family would be able to afford a "Hero Bandit" who had at least the strength of a Sequence 6, and he believed that there was a higher probability that the investigation would be directed towards the secrets Capim was involved in, supplemented by "who had been keeping tabs on Capim recently," and other peripheral investigations, he still cautiously decided to put on a show and try his best to play out the entire act. What if one of the Beyonder enforcers lost their mind and planned to make a preliminary investigation in this aspect?

Some families might have some savings and would be able to hire other detectives. The chances of being suspected as a kindhearted person like me who just took on the case yesterday are extremely low. As long as I'm not suspected, they wouldn't compare my performance from the previous Lanevus case… Besides, the Nighthawks were the ones who took action

previously and were assisted by the military's special department. Capim's case happened in Cherwood Borough, so the ones taking on the case would likely be the Mandated Punishers. The communication between the two groups wouldn't be that smooth… Hmm, Katy and Parker belong to the Arbiter pathway. I wonder if the military will intervene… As a former Nighthawk, Klein had a sufficient understanding of the modus operandi of the various official organizations, their work styles, and their investigation habits.

Simply put, I have excellent anti-detective abilities… Klein gave a self-deprecating laugh as he boarded a carriage.

He was going to continue his investigation into Daisy's disappearance.

After all, he was an ordinary private detective who hadn't been able to confirm that Daisy's disappearance had anything to do with Capim.

…

At nine o'clock in the morning, Daisy returned to the shabby rented apartment under the escort of the police officer in charge of the neighborhood.

Along with a few pitiful girls like her, she had been settled into the various cathedrals in Cherwood Borough last night and had been questioned accordingly. It included what they saw when they escaped, what they saw when they looked back, where they lived, what their family situation was, if they knew any friends who were out of the ordinary, and so on and so forth.

Daisy, who was still in a state of panic and lingering fear, answered the questions truthfully.

After that, no one came to her again.

She slept through the night and was sent back to East Borough early in the morning, where she was handed over to the fierce police officer she always

saw.

Along the way, Daisy didn't dare to say anything. She trembled in fear, and only when she entered the apartment where she lived did she feel a little more at ease.

As soon as she stepped through the door, and before she could find her mother and sister through the hanging wet clothes, she heard a scream.

"Daisy!"

Freja stopped whatever she was doing and, like a nimble fawn, darted through the clothes hanging in the air and the random things on the ground. She ran to the door and hugged her sister tightly.

Then she let go of her hand, and with tears streaming down her cheeks, she sized Daisy up with pleasant surprise and in concern.

"Are you alright?

"It's so wonderful that you're finally back!"

Liv also stood up from behind the washbasin. She wiped her hands on her clothes and asked, rubbing her eyes, "Daisy, where have you been these past few days?"

At that moment, the police officer interrupted, "She was kidnapped. We rescued her."

"Thank you, thank you! You guys are t-too great!" Liv shed tears and randomly used an adjective.

The policeman coughed lightly and said, "That's our duty… Have you met anyone strange in the past few days?"

Liv was stunned for a second. Hoping to not be involved in too many matters or get into any trouble, she said, "No, I really haven't."

The policeman waved his hand and said, "Be more careful in the future! Don't take deserted shortcuts again!"

He couldn't stand the humidity and the motley of smells so he turned and left.

Liv looked at her daughter again. She took wide strides over to her side and wiped her hands on the side of her clothes before hugging Daisy.

"It's good that you're back. It's good that you're back…" she murmured through her tears, not asking if Daisy had been hurt.

Daisy relaxed and sobbed.

Beside her, Freja was also crying. She stretched out her arms and hugged her mother and sister respectively.

The three of them cried for a while before letting go.

Liv wiped her eyes again and said, "Wash the clothes first; there are still a lot of them."

Daisy, who had just been rescued, nodded and quickly threw herself into her busy work.

It wasn't until noon, while they were nibbling on their black bread and drinking plain water that could hardly even be considered tea, that Liv finally had time to ask, "Daisy, were you hurt?"

Daisy shook her head.

"They just hit me a few times."

"That's great! The police rescued you? A kind detective was willing to help search for you for free yesterday, and you ended up returning today. Ah, he still has your vocabulary book," Freja mentioned in passing.

Already prepared, Liv mentioned, "I'll get Old Kohler to get it back and tell the detective you're home so that he won't have to busy himself over this matter. Regardless, we have to thank him again."

Daisy felt relieved as she replied to her sister's question, "No, it wasn't the police. There was a sudden explosion, and the doors that kept us locked up were strangely opened, and we just ran out. However, I did see a gentleman or a lady on the roof.

"He wore black armor, a crown-like helmet, and a cape. He just stood there watching us quietly. None of those bad guys came to stop us or chase us down."

As a tutor at the free school, Daisy clearly had a richer set of vocabulary than her mother, Liv.

"A person dressed like that saved you?" Liv answered in shock. By the side, Freja curiously waited for the answer.

Daisy nodded seriously and said, "Yes, he's l-like what the bard sing of…

"A hero!"

Hero.… Freja ruminated over the word, her eyes as bright as the stars.

…

In a certain secret chamber, a group of people were carefully comparing the Lanevus case with the Capim case using the information they were given as they searched for similarities between the motives and modus operandi.

"The two things cannot be linked together at all. The only thing that they have in common is evil, or rather, evil was defeated. The owner of the tarot card has upheld justice," someone exclaimed.

"It can be confirmed that the two cases didn't involve the same person. The difference in strength is obvious, and what they're good at is even more contrasting. Although it's possible that their Sequence had been elevated, Capim's murderer was a kind of specter, or someone that can switch into the Sequence state. That's not something common." Another person's analysis was endorsed by the majority.

Therefore, the person who called the meeting concluded, "Two cases, two different people, but they both threw out tarot cards. Perhaps the latter was committing a copycat crime, and if that's the case, we can target the people who are aware of the Lanevus case. The other possibility is that there is an organization!

"An organization symbolized by tarot cards!"

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CHAPTER 384
ON YOUR OWN YOU CHECK YOURSELF

In Empress Borough, the opulent villa of Count Hall.

The aroma of Feynapotter's top-quality Mount Saint Dersee coffee blended with the splendid fragrance of the Queen's black tea to create an intoxicating symphony of smells. They lingered around the elegant three-tiered high tea tray, that served delicious and delicate desserts.

This was the high tea party organized by Audrey.

She had invited her friends of blue-blood parentage, all who were fellow enthusiasts in mysticism. They sat around her, talking and laughing.

Under Audrey's imperceptible guidance, Jane, Murray, and the others became extremely interested in the Dark Emperor, the Hero Bandit who had appeared last night. All of them cast their eyes towards the noble-born Kance Leerhsen who had joined MI9.

"What Beyonder powers does that Dark Emperor have?" the sweet-looking Christine asked curiously.

Among the few of them, the lowest rank among their fathers was that of a viscount. It allowed them to have sufficient status and channels to understand the existence of Beyonder powers and potions in their endearing pursuit of mysticism. But just like Audrey before, they were all unwilling to join the Nighthawks, the Mandated Punishers, the Machinery Hivemind, and MI9.

Other than that, the families that they belonged to didn't have histories that traced back to a thousand years ago, and even the ancient aristocrats that had just been established in the Fourth Epoch of the Loen Kingdom weren't completely loyal to the royal family or to the upper echelons of the military. They weren't bestowed with any formulas, and even if they had Beyonder ingredients, it was unlikely that they could recognize them. They wouldn't even know how to use them even if they did recognize them.

This limited the possibility of Murray, Christine, and the others in becoming Beyonders. They could only look forward to it, but it was difficult for them to take that crucial step.

As for whether or not their elders had collected the potion formulas and nurtured Beyonders for their families, that was beyond their purview. After all, this wasn't allowed; if the King were to find out, they could use this as a reason to strip them of their noble titles.

Of course, there were already two traitors in the living room: Audrey, who had advanced to Sequence 8 Telepathist; and Viscount Glaint, who had gathered one portion of Beyonder ingredients. It wouldn't be long before he became an Apothecary.

The tall, thin, young gentleman, Kance, took a sip of his coffee and said, "I won't give you a direct answer. I'll just tell you some facts.

"Other than traces of a gas explosion in the dining room where the battle happened, various means were used to detect poison, substitutes, Specter's Shriek, bullets condensed with holy powers, and other elements. By the way, that Dark Emperor, no—Hero Bandit was in a specter state."

*It doesn't look like the person who had killed Rear Admiral Hurricane Qilangos, nor does it look like the person who had dealt with Lanevus in the sewers… Is the person involved in Capim's case Mr. Fool's third adorer who stole the Dark Emperor's card? There are at least three adorers in Backlund alone… How many adorers does "He" have in total? *Audrey's

heart skipped a beat as she deliberately asked, "Was there an intense Beyonder battle?"

Murray, under her lead, asked one step further, "There were Beyonders at Capim's place? Relatively powerful Beyonders? And there was more than one?"

"He's just a trafficker…" Viscount Glaint unconsciously expressed his doubt.

Audrey maintained her faint smile and curious gaze, patiently waiting for Kance's reply.

Kance laughed and said, "Murray's guess is correct. I can only say this much.

"Do you want me to be locked up by Captain?"

Capim's place had more than one relatively powerful Beyonder…

Indeed, he's not an ordinary human trafficker. He might be involved in many matters regarding mysticism…

Human trafficker… Could he be involved in some cult's sacrificial rite? Mr. Fool's adorer attacked because of this?

It was roughly the same with Lanevus. It involved a cult and sacrifices, as well as the descent of the True Creator… I wonder which cult and evil god is behind Capim…

Mr. Fool's goal seems to have always been targeting these evil gods… Is it really strife between the gods? Who knows how many grand schemes of those evil gods "He" has foiled… Audrey made many connections as her heart surged with emotions.

Our Tarot Club's enemies are the evil gods!

The rest aren't qualified!

Does Mr. Fool wish to get the title of "The Nemesis of Evil Gods?" Audrey pursed her lips and chuckled softly in her heart.

Then, she suppressed her emotions and secretly made a confession.

Audrey, how can you do this? How can you use Mr. Fool as a joke…

…

At noon, when Klein returned to Minsk Street, he found, as he had expected, a letter from Old Kohler who had paid a carriage driver to deliver to his mailbox.

This was their agreed upon contact method during an emergency.

Of course, according to Klein's prediction, Old Kohler, who didn't know many words, could only use simple symbols to tell him where and when they would meet. To his surprise, it was actually written in neat writing when he opened the letter.

With a quick glance, Klein confirmed that it was identical to the handwriting in Daisy's vocabulary book.

Looks like this girl was the one who helped Old Kohler write it… This piece of paper doesn't seem to be exposed to moisture. Perhaps Old Kohler had bought some in the event he needs to contact me urgently… Klein opened the door to the living room and read the letter.

Only taking off his hat and cane, he leaned his cane against the wall. He didn't take off his coat because the fireplace in the room wasn't lit yet, and the early November cold was silently seeping into his bones.

The letter was simple; after all, Daisy didn't know many words either.

She thanked the detective for his kindness and good intentions before telling him that she safely returned home, and she finally said, in a tactful way, that she hoped he would bring her vocabulary book with him the next time he came to East Borough.

What a polite girl… Klein chuckled. He snapped his fingers and burned the letter, leaving no clues behind.

He decided to return to East Borough the next day and return the book to Daisy, as well as reimburse Old Kohler for the cost of the letter delivery letters, paper, and fountain pens.

With this in mind, he couldn't help but sigh and chortle.

"Captain, now it's my turn to approve the expense claims of others…”

Without wasting any time, he went out again and went straight to the Quelaag Club, where Dr. Aaron was seen more often during Friday afternoons. Klein wanted to ask about Will Auceptin, the child who had played with tarot cards.

After entering the Quelaag Club in Hillston Borough, Klein said to the red-vested attendant, "A cup of marquis black tea and a serving of dessert. Send it to the corner seat of the main hall. Dr. Aaron, Reporter Mike, and the others are sitting there."

Klein had already spotted the relatively cold and famous surgeon, Aaron Ceres, who was wearing gold-rimmed glasses, as well as Reporter Mike Joseph from the Daily Observer, who he had worked with twice and had a pair of charming blue eyes. He also saw the aristocratic equestrian teacher, Talim Dumont, whose frequency of appearing at the club was only second to his.

"Oh, our great detective is here, and we happened to be talking about you." Talim stood up with a smile.

"Speaking bad things behind my back?" Klein joked.

Mike stood up and shook his hand.

"No, I want to hire you again."

"What's the matter this time?" Klein bowed at Dr. Aaron and sat down at their table.

Mike chuckled and said, "I'm sure you've read the papers? Capim has been killed off by the Hero Bandit Dark Emperor, and his crimes have been exposed. What a joyous event!

"And as a reporter, I need to have an acumen for the news. I plan to get a list of names of the girls who were rescued in East Borough from the police department to interview them. Then, I'll paint Capim's most cruel, most evil, and most unforgivable side to the readers of the newspaper. Of course, the victims must remain anonymous."

He paused for a moment and suppressed his voice.

"I also have a hidden objective, or should I say, I wish to use the interview to know if these girls or their family know any relatively special friends. Who knows, that might be Hero Bandit Dark Emperor!"

You've found the right person… The corners of Klein's mouth almost twitched.

He smiled at Mike and said, "We've already worked together on East Borough's matters. We have sufficient familiarity and trust, so I have no reason to decline."

"I hope for a pleasant partnership." Mike stretched out his hand. "We'll start tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, and we'll be paid the same as last time for a total of ten pounds."

At that moment, Dr. Aaron, who had been listening by the side, said, "Sherlock, I want to hire you as well. This evening, or after dinner."

It looks like my business is improving recently… Klein asked, amused, "Will it conflict with Mike's request?"

"No." Aaron shook his head. "My luck recently has been pretty good. This makes me suspect that my bout of bad luck was because of that child's inverted Wheel of Fortune card and the words he said. I'm very troubled and puzzled in this regard. I swear to god that I was very nice to him, and I treated him with the best of intentions. Why would he treat me that way? I wish to visit him at his place and confirm that he didn't do it on purpose. However, I'm ultimately afraid that something similar would happen again or some accident might occur. Therefore, I wish to hire you to protect me. Just for tonight. It won't conflict with Mike's request. How about it?"

That's what I wanted to do! After challenging the impossible and doing good deeds, my moral standing has become pretty good… Am I really going to become the King of Yellow and Black who wields good luck? Klein was pleasantly surprised as he said with a reserved smile, "No problem, we can talk about the remuneration."

…

City of Silver.

Derrick Berg once again examined the translucent worm with twelve circles, the remains of Amon's avatar.

He had originally wanted to ask Mr. Fool what this was exactly, but considering how he had already troubled this godlike figure once, he couldn't bring himself to ask as he abandoned this plan. Now, he planned on showing it at the next Tarot Gathering and ask Mr. Hanged Man, Miss Justice, and the rest.

After hiding the worm, Derrick suddenly thought of something. It was about time for the team that had gone with Shepherd Elder Lovia, to explore the half-destroyed temple of the Fallen Creator, to return—it wasn't too far from the City of Silver, and it was in a direction that they hadn't set foot in before.

He decided to take a look. There were quite a few people he knew among the expedition team.

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CHAPTER 385
A STORY ABOUT LOVE

Looking at the dark sky being lit up by streaks of lightning, Derrick didn't knock on the doors of the few acquaintances he knew. Instead, he walked along the broadest road and walked all the way to the training field at the edge of the City of Silver.

After each exploration team returned, they were forced to stay here for a certain period of time. Not only would it be convenient for them to communicate and report on the things they encountered in the darkness, but they would also be quarantined in a tactful manner to guard against strange things that might latch onto any member's body and suddenly erupt after a certain amount of time.

This was the result of the City of Silver's two thousand years of experience. It wasn't that complicated, but it was quite useful.

As soon as he entered the training ground with the Axe of Hurricane stuffed behind his waist, Derrick Berg's eyes suddenly lit up. He saw the gorgeous Elder Lovia, who seemed to be in her thirties, as well as two familiar faces that were his age.

Due to the City of Silver's limited environment, its population was unable to grow any further. The number of people of a certain age group was an adequate number, and although Derrick wouldn't dare say he knew all of them, he had seen a majority of them before. He was classmates and partners with some of them during general education classes and on the practice grounds.

The person Derrick was most familiar with on this expedition team was Darc Regence, who had once been his patrol teammate.

The youngster named Darc was of medium height and was slightly chubby. He was strong, optimistic, and cheerful. His face often beamed with a friendly smile. Currently, he was a Sequence 8 Gladiator of the Giant pathway.

At this moment, the two parties were separated by a translucent wall that was as hard as steel, making it impossible for them to make any effective form of contact. They had to wait until the members of the exploration team were confirmed to have no problems before they could meet directly.

Derrick, who had become silent and withdrawn since the death of his parents, waved to Darc.

Noticing this, the Gladiator turned his head to the side and looked over.

"Darc, how was it? You didn't encounter any danger, did you? " Derrick shouted.

The material used to create the black wall in that area came from somewhere that wasn't far from the City of Silver and was called Dark Amber. It was hard as steel, but at the same time, it possessed a certain degree of transparency and had properties that made it good for transmitting sound. Derrick's speech went through unobstructed.

Derrick imagined that Darc would definitely smile brightly and wave his arms out of habit, saying, "Take a look, I'm not injured at all, so shouldn't it be obvious that we didn't meet with any danger. It was nothing!"

Hearing his voice, Darc walked a few steps closer to the wall and answered with a smile, "No, everything went smoothly."

Looking at his smile without any faults, Derrick suddenly felt a chill run through his body. It was just like he was camping in a ruined tower or a

ruined city at night. Darkness was all around him as they accumulated into overwhelming horror.

…

Inside the Quelaag Club, Klein and Dr. Aaron agreed on the remuneration: two pounds!

I have to say that a doctor's money sure is easy to earn… If it were me in the past, such a request would have cost at most 10 soli… Klein, who already had the intention to take the mission, sighed in his heart.

He remembered that during his time with the Nighthawks, he had heard Corpse Collector Frye mention that famous doctors had very high incomes.

At the time, in a response that was unlike the poet, Leonard Mitchell, he said that as far as he knew, if a house was bought in a busy borough in Backlund for a storefront, the quickest option would be to turn it into a clinic.

They agreed to call on Will Auceptin's place after dinner. It wasn't three o'clock in the afternoon, so the equestrian teacher, Talim, gathered the three of them together at a table, and they began playing a game of Upgrade, the game which was invented by Emperor Roselle.

*What I expected was to play tennis, practice shooting, flip through the books in the library, and live a healthy life… But why did it become like this… *Klein spontaneously thought in between the card game.

Frankly, with his current accomplishments in "magic," he could've easily cleared out all the money Dr. Aaron, Reporter Mike, and Talim had on them.

But I'm an honest man, and I believe more in my skills and luck… As the red-vested attendant shuffled the cards, Klein picked up a cream cracker and took a savory bite.

He couldn't help but marvel from the bottom of his heart, *This is life!*

During the game, Klein noticed one thing—the equestrian teacher, Talim, was no longer in a daze or as upset as he was before.

Has the matter of his friend falling in love with someone he shouldn't have been resolved? Klein thought curiously as he sipped the marquis black tea.

As a detective, he knew that this wasn't something he should ask in front of others, so he restrained himself and concentrated on his card game.

By five o'clock, Mike Joseph had to go back to his company, so the game was suspended and Klein won five soli.

My luck has been quite good recently… While Klein sighed with relief, he saw Dr. Aaron leave the table for the washroom. He controlled his voice and said with a low laugh, "Talim, has your friend's problem been settled?"

Talim, who was throwing the cards in his hands onto the table, paused for a second before sighing with a smile.

"You could say so."

He added with a certain desire to continue, "Actually, it wasn't too serious. It was because I was thinking too much at the time.

"Simply put, it was an illustrious young gentleman who fell in love with a commoner. You should know that a man of such status has to marry a noble lady. Heh, to him, not even the daughter of a rich man can do."

So that's how it is… To think that I made up all sorts of contrived and bizarre stories, such as falling in love with a man, a monster, or a person that isn't permitted because of moral principles… Klein was disappointed and said with a laugh, "As far as I know, gentlemen of high society don't mind having a mistress."

"No, Sherlock, you don't understand. Love, do you get it? Love! That young gentleman only wants to marry that commoner woman," Talim exclaimed with a sigh.

No, I don't understand, I'm just a bachelor dog 1. Klein opened his mouth, unable to respond.

Talim sighed to himself.

"For the sake of that young gentleman's future, I once thought of asking you to find people with some miraculous abilities to covertly, heh heh… Anyways, I'm a law-abiding citizen, so it was just an idea."

"How was the matter resolved afterward?" Klein asked with interest.

Talim picked up his highlander coffee and took a sip.

"The solution was much simpler than I thought. I went straight to the lady and told her of the dilemma. She sensibly expressed her willingness to leave the gentleman and asked for my help.

"I must say that she's truly a considerate, kind, refined, and beautiful girl. If it wasn't for the consideration of my identity, perhaps I would've knelt in front of her and kissed the back of her hand."

"Well, it seems like I couldn't have helped." Klein picked up the golden-rimmed white porcelain cup of black tea.

As a visitor from Earth, he was completely uninterested in the task of breaking up couples.

However, listening to gossip was another matter altogether.

…

After having dinner at the Quelaag Club and tasting the limited-supply of Sonia Lobsters, Klein and Dr. Aaron took the latter's carriage to Will Auceptin's house at 66 Dalton Street in North Borough.

This was the address that Dr. Aaron had long since memorized. He didn't return to the hospital to look up the appropriate medical records, and according to Klein's conjecture, any relevant information pertaining to Will Auceptin would likely have been taken away by the Nighthawks.

*As a former Nighthawk, I know exactly how they do things… *Klein smiled bitterly and sighed.

Pulling the doorbell, the two waited for a while before they saw the door open. A maid in a black and white dress puzzledly asked, "Gentlemen, who are you looking for?"

Seeing that Aaron was still as cold as usual, Klein took the initiative to speak up.

"We're looking for Will Auceptin. This is his attending physician. He came back to check on his health."

"I-I don't know him. I've only been here for a few days… I'll get my master. Please wait a moment," the maid answered blankly.

While they were waiting, Aaron suddenly said, "I almost believed the reason you came up with just now."

"This is a basic quality of being a detective." Klein chuckled.

At that moment, an old gentleman in his fifties walked to the door and said with a deep voice, "Will Auceptin and his family have already moved away on…”

He gave a date.

Aaron did a slight count before frowning.

"Why would they go through the trouble to move two days after being discharged from the hospital after the operation?"

He acted like he was really on a follow-up visit.

Klein was slightly puzzled and asked, "Sir, how do you know the date so clearly?"

Typically speaking, subsequent tenants would only move in after a certain period of time.

That old gentleman snappily replied, "Someone came to ask before, and I even went to look for the landlord just for that."

The Nighthawks… Klein asked without much hope, "Do you know where Will Auceptin and his family moved to?"

"No," the old man said tersely.

"Did they leave anything behind?" Klein hesitated for a moment before continuing with his questions.

"Some stuff," the old man took a deep breath and continued, "but they were all taken away by the previous group of people!"

Meeting colleagues truly is a helpless matter… They can always think of the things you think of ahead of time… Klein couldn't help but sigh.

Seeing that there were no further clues, Klein and Aaron politely excused themselves and left 66 Dalton Street.

"It seems like you'll have to wait a long time before you can resolve your doubts." Klein turned to Dr. Aaron.

Aaron was silent for a few seconds, then he slowly let out a breath.

"After what happened just now, I'm not so troubled anymore. I'm just a doctor, and it's good enough to mind my own affairs. I should return to do a follow-up check-up and not question the situation, what other people think, or why they're not kind. That shouldn't be something I should be concerned with. In the future, I should just try to maintain the relationship between a doctor and a patient as much as possible."

"It's for the best that you can think this way." Klein agreed from the bottom of his heart, then he casually asked, "At the time, what was wrong with Will Auceptin's left leg?"

"His left calf grew a strange tumor that coincidentally formed a ring that pressed down heavily onto his blood vessels." Dr. Aaron recalled as he said, "But the kid didn't look too upset, just a little scared, and we wanted to preserve the leg at first, but it was getting worse."

Footnotes:

Ch 385 Footnote 1

A Chinese phrase describing singles.

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CHAPTER 386
A NIGHTMARE

City of Silver.

Derrick Berg had no idea how he got home. All he remembered was the indescribable horror.

Darc Regence's character and behavior didn't appear too different from his former self. However, it was true that there was a change to him that was unsettling. Derrick was afraid that the City of Silver would be targeted by the evil god, the Fallen Creator; afraid that the City of Silver would be obliterated before he could become The Sun, saving it from its more than two-thousand-year-long curse; and give hope and sunshine to the residents here.

At that moment in time, he hated himself for not being strong enough—that he was still only at Sequence 8.

*No! I can't just watch idly! *Derrick suddenly stood up, and he prepared to rush to the spire and tell the other elders of the six-member council and Chief Colin Iliad of what he had discovered.

However, Derrick knew that such anomalies weren't suspicious. Every time they explored the depths of the darkness, the members would have a period of intense tension lasting for days, tens of days, or even more than a month.

In addition, the uninhabited desolate plains and the hopeless journey would bring about extreme depression. In addition, in order to be safe, the members of the exploration team wouldn't be allowed to release any sexual urges that had been pent up during their excursions, which caused them to

act differently after every exploration. If they ended up with more than half the team ending up dead or injured, a huge change in personality wasn't a rare occurrence.

The manner of handling such people could only be dealt with via the usual quarantine and treatment with almost zero exceptions.

The City of Silver had the first three Sequences of the Dragon pathway, so there was no lack of Psyche Analysts.

Derrick rushed to the door and suddenly slowed down.

He knew that this method of reporting to the six-member council might not be effective. It would likely arouse suspicion, and there might even be the threat of being targeted by the Shepherd, Elder Lovia.

After pacing back and forth for more than ten seconds, Derrick gritted his teeth and pulled the door open.

He felt that he had to warn the elders of the six-member council, even if it would be a huge risk for him!

For the vast majority of the residents of the City of Silver, sacrificing their lives to maintain the existence of this city and the continuation of this civilization was the belief that was ingrained into their bones.

Selfish people often didn't live long in such environments regardless of whether it was outside or inside.

Of course, Derrick wasn't completely reckless. Under the tutelage of the members of the Tarot Club, especially The Hanged Man, he clearly understood that there were times when one had to be patient, protect himself properly, and avoid unnecessary sacrifices in order to better defend the City of Silver.

I'll only talk about the abnormality I observed. It shouldn't be dangerous… Derrick consoled himself, running faster and faster.

Finally, he saw the spire that represented the highest authority in the City of Silver.

He found a Beyonder on duty and made a request to meet with the Chief.

To Derrick's surprise, the Beyonder didn't ask the usual questions. After simply passing on the information, he was led up the stairs to the Chief's room.

Very strange… It's different from before… Derrick felt that the changes in the details made him more uneasy.

Entering the room, he saw Chief Colin Iliad standing in front of a wall.

This tall elder, with his deep blue eyes and messy white hair, had his back facing two swords that hung on the wall. He wore his usual flaxen-colored shirt and brown coat, and it was hard to believe that he was an expert who had successfully hunted many devils and monsters.

"Derrick Berg, what matter would actually require you to tell me it, face to face?" Colin asked in a deep voice.

"Your Excellency." Derrick saluted. "I met the team that was sent to explore that temple at the training grounds today. I-I found that the Darc Regence I know has experienced a strange change. He's no longer as cheerful as he was before, and his smile is as polite as a stranger's. Also, Elder Lovia doesn't frequently change the way she speaks like she usually did."

Colin looked deeply at Derrick and asked in a low voice, "Just these two things?"

"Yes, yes." Derrick lowered his head. "I think there might be something unusual about that."

Colin waved his hand and said, "I got it, I'll get Aiflor to do an investigation. You may return. In the future, you just need to report such matters to the guardian of the spire directly."

Aiflor was the City of Silver's most experienced Psyche Analyst who was closest to Sequence 6. It was a pity that there was no potion formula after Sequence 7.

After receiving such an answer, Derrick left gloomily.

Looking at Derrick's back as he disappeared by the door, Colin sighed in disappointment.

…

After talking to Dr. Aaron about Will Auceptin's situation for a while. Klein got off the carriage and took the steam metro. After three stops, he arrived near Minsk Street and switched to a trackless public carriage to return home.

As it was still early, he used divination to confirm that the previous tenant wasn't lying, and then he diligently continued to study the Book of Secrets.

Ever since he had obtained this mysterious book, Klein's use of the mysterious space above the gray fog became more and more ingenious as he completed many more outstanding techniques.

"What limits me now is my own Sequence, my own strength, and spirituality." Late at night, Klein hid the Book of Secrets and went to the bathroom to wash up, in preparation for bed.

That night, he slept soundly. Even the church bells in the morning only made him turn over.

Winter is the best time to stay in bed… Klein grunted and got up.

To reward the Hero Bandit Dark Emperor, he had a sugared hard-boiled egg and strawberry jam he specially bought to match with white bread.

Just as he was enjoying his meal, the doorbell suddenly rang.

"Didn't I tell Mike to come after breakfast?" He took a sip of the sweet soup and wiped his mouth with a napkin.

According to his agreement with Reporter Mike, he would only arrive half an hour after breakfast before they began interviewing the rescued girls of East Borough. If Mike didn't appear after half an hour, then it meant that the matter would be delayed by a day.

Klein walked to the door, but before he could reach out his hand, the outline of a visitor appeared in his mind. He wasn't Reporter Mike Joseph but Dr. Aaron Ceres.

"Good morning, Aaron. Did you sleep late last night?" Klein noticed that Aaron's face was pale, so he quietly activated his Spirit Vision to take a look.

Aaron took off his hat and cane and started to take off his coat, but the cold air in the room stopped him.

Klein laughed dryly and said, "As you know, I'll be going out today. Mike might come looking for me, so I didn't light up the fireplace."

Aaron nodded and didn't say anything else. He followed Klein into the living room, found a seat and sat down.

"Sherlock, I had a nightmare last night. I dreamed about that child, Will Auceptin!"

*Nightmare? This is within the limits of my knowledge… I'm a professional when it comes to interpreting dreams, far more professional

than deduction… *Klein leaned forward, clasped his hands, and said, "What kind of nightmare?"

Aaron recalled and said, "There are some details and processes that I can't remember. What I remember most is a tall, pitch-black steeple with a huge silver snake coiled around it. It was moving slowly, looking at me with its cold, merciless red eyes.

"I don't know why, but I entered the steeple, and I would go up the stairs and, at other times, down the stairs, going through walls after walls, and one locked door after another. Finally, I found the child called Will Auceptin in a dark corner. He hopped a few steps on one leg and curled up against the wall, with tarot cards scattered everywhere beside him.

"When he saw me, he was scared and happy. He called out, 'Dr. Aaron'… The whole dream was roughly like that before I woke up."

Klein listened attentively and thought for a while before asking, "Did Will Auceptin say anything else?"

Aaron frowned in thought before suddenly saying, "Yes, he said, 'Dr. Aaron, a snake wants to eat me!'

"Following that, a giant silver snake hung down from the ceiling, its head facing me…

"Its mouth was very big, but it has no teeth, no tongue, and it was completely blood-red!"

*Silver giant snake… A pitch-black steeple… Will Auceptin protected under layers of protection… *Klein said to Dr. Aaron in a measured voice, "It's not a very strange dream. It likely has you subconsciously sensing some kind of predicament he was in while you were talking to Will Auceptin, that he was being threatened by something. That's why you dreamed of something like this: a child hiding in the depths of a tall steeple,

behind countless walls and doors, huge silver snakes coiling around the top of the steeple…

"Heh heh, as a detective, we know a little bit of psychology. It's also often talked about in the newspapers.

"What I don't understand is why you didn't have such a dream until today."

Klein didn't lie about his interpretation, but he didn't reveal the possible true reasons behind it.

Aaron opened his mouth and said, "I was in too much of a hurry just now and forgot to mention something."

As he spoke, he took out a leather wallet and took out a fairly exquisitely folded paper crane.

"After realizing that Will Auceptin and his family had moved away, I remembered that he had given me this before he left the hospital, saying, 'Doctor, this will bring you good luck.'

"I didn't pay much attention to it at the time and casually threw it into the office drawer. After parting with you last night, I went to retrieve it and put it in my wallet. As a result, I had a nightmare that very night."

Klein looked at the paper crane, nodded thoughtfully and said, "Dr. Aaron, it looks like Will Auceptin didn't deliberately bring you bad luck. He had made up for it later. The paper crane invented by Emperor Roselle is meant to act as symbolism for wishing you well; besides, he said it would bring you good luck."

Aaron subconsciously asked, "Origami was invented by Emperor Roselle?"

*I don't know if it's him, but I think it's likely him… *Klein smiled.

"Probably."

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CHAPTER 387
THE UNIQUENESS OF A SPIRIT WORLD

Aaron was relieved by Klein's explanation and reassurance, and he prepared to observe for a few more days to see if there were any more nightmares such as this.

After sending the famous surgeon out of the door with a smile, Klein's expression suddenly became solemn, as if he was thinking about something.

There was no problem with his interpretation of the dream. The pitch-black steeple, the walls and doors that blocked his path, and the giant silver snake, they all symbolized that Will Auceptin was in a situation where he was threatened by something that symbolized the child's fear and helplessness, as well as his attempts to hide behind layers of protection.

But the problem was that this was unlikely to be a revelation Dr. Aaron's spirituality had received on its own. Otherwise, he wouldn't have had such a dream only until last night, or when he found the paper crane. A similar development should've taken place long before Will Auceptin was discharged, back when his spirituality unconsciously became aware of the particularly strange developments, allowing him to have similar experiences as he had now.

Therefore, Klein suspected that the medium which instilled the dream into Dr. Aaron was the paper crane!

Klein activated his Spirit Vision to carefully observe this handicraft, but he didn't find any spiritual brilliance. However, his spiritual perception and

intuition told him that there was something strange about this piece of origami. Certain magical aspects that might involve the most illusory, most difficult to comprehend, and most worthy of fear and reverence—fate.

That child called Will Auceptin isn't simple… It seems like the most amazing thing wasn't the tarot card, but rather he himself… The giant silver snake is a symbol of danger, and this matter is related to bad luck, good luck, and other elements. Could it be that it represents the Snake of Mercury, Sequence 1 of the Monster pathway? Klein's thoughts wandered, but he couldn't be certain of anything.

He turned to question the problem of how the dream was instilled.

With Klein's accomplishments in mysticism, this wasn't something that was too complicated or difficult to understand. He quickly came up with an idea.

The first thing to do was to rule out the influence of specters and wraiths, which would've stained Dr. Aaron's aura with a blackish-green color of varying degrees, and I didn't see any sign of that just now.

There are two main ways of instilling information without causing the owner of the dream to appear abnormal. One of them is using the Beyonder powers of a Nightmare like Captain. An objective is met through guidance, and it wouldn't involve the culprit; otherwise, traces would similarly be left behind. The second method would be even more ingenious and advanced.

The principle of a dreamland is that of Astral Projections traveling through the spirit world, and the details that one would normally unwittingly notice, under external stimulation, would turn into a symbolic revelation. Or, they can obtain some enlightenment directly related to themselves from external sources. Then, their Spirit Bodies and psyche would be informed of this, and because the owner of the body was in a state of sleep, this will appear in the form of a dream.

So the second way is to instill it into the spirit world!

First, use some magical method to create the revelation that one will need, and then naturally let the target's Astral Projection obtain and feedback the information while roaming the spirit world. That way, the target will be able to dream of the scene that others would want them to dream of, and there will be no superficial traces.

This is something that I'm currently unable to do, even if it's a Spirit Body that's able to partially wield some of the power above the gray fog.

Klein paused for a moment and then added another possibility.

A seed was planted in Dr. Aaron's subconscious through the paper crane, and once he found it, he would have the corresponding dream.

That's easy to confirm. As long as I use mediumship on Dr. Aaron, I should be able to find traces of it… However, would it be unfriendly to use mediumship on him? Or should I borrow the Mental Terror Candle from Father Utravsky? No, the one who recognized me was that vampire, the zealous figurine lover, Emlyn White, not the muscular, giant-like Father Utravsky… Klein reined in his thoughts and considered his subsequent actions.

He decided that he would wait until he went above the gray fog to divine the level of danger. If it was an acceptable level, he would sneak into Dr. Aaron's house tonight, use the Dream Charm and other methods to secretly observe him, and see if the source of the dreamland was a result of direct guidance or an indirect fabrication.

However, with Klein's strength and level, it would be difficult to find traces of the latter. Even he himself didn't have much confidence.

This didn't mean that his Astral Projection could travel the same spirit world as Dr. Aaron's Astral Projection by sitting next to him and entering Cogitation. This required a sufficient amount of locking on to do so.

According to the descriptions in the Book of Secrets, the existence of the spirit world was quite magical. It completely overlapped with the real world, so everyone could obtain revelations from the spirit world at any time. However, the spirit world didn't distinguish between directions, and the past, present, or future could even intersect there. It was like infinite knowledge, information, and illusions were spiritually gathered and compressed into a strange sea. It was different from the "world" as one would imagine according to usual concepts or logic.

As a result of this, the revelations that one received from the spirit world could only be a variety of symbols, not direct answers. And precisely because of this, every Astral Projection's experience of traveling in the spirit world was not only related to their physical location and time, but it was also dependent on the current state of their body and the mind. Without locking on to the corresponding location, it made it impossible to lock onto and find a person's Astral Projection in the spirit world, even if one was physically next to them.

This was also the reason why the Astral Projection's movement in the spirit world was limited and one doesn't dare to venture too deep. Once it got lost and was unable to return to its body, its owner would become a retard and, even more seriously, a vegetable.

It was even more difficult to use the spirit world as a springboard for transference. If one wasn't careful, then they would lose their way and never be able to return to the real world until they rot to death.

Phew… Klein exhaled, temporarily throwing the question to the back of his mind.

He took out his pocket watch and looked at the time. He realized that he had been thinking too long, that his breakfast had already turned completely cold, and that the fact that Reporter Mike hadn't arrived yet meant that the commission was likely to be delayed by a day.

In the spirit of not wasting anything, Klein finished the rest of his meal and then went above the gray fog to make a divination. He was surprised to find that there were no revelations indicating danger at all.

After doing all of this, the appointed time had passed. Without any hesitation, he changed into a heavy jacket, put on his cap, grabbed the vocabulary book, and left 15 Minsk Street.

His initial plan was to accompany Mike Joseph to East Borough for an interview and find an opportunity to hint at Old Kohler to not mention his promise of helping Liv find her daughter.

As for Liv's family, he let Old Kohler do the reminding.

And now, after Mike had pushed back the interview by a day, Klein was even more at ease, no longer worried about any mishaps or mistakes.

…

With the address mentioned by Old Kohler, and according to the revelation from divination, Klein entered the depths of East Borough, and under the watchful, wary, numb, or greedy gaze of the crowds, he found the room on the third floor.

There were two bunk beds here, and there were also some old and worn bedding on the floor. Every empty space was filled with sundries.

Klein looked directly at the bottom bunk of the innermost bunk and called out, "Old Kohler."

With a swoosh, Old Kohler sat up and leaned towards the door in pleasant surprise, "You really came. After sending you that letter yesterday, I already guessed that you would come looking for me today, so I didn't go to the dock. I've been waiting at home all this time."

Well, I don't have to think about how to fabricate the lie about why I came straight here to find you… Klein looked around and said, "Old Kohler, with your current income, you can definitely rent a better room and move to a better place. Why did you only change your bed from the floor to a bunk bed?"

"Most of the money is for gathering information for you." Old Kohler laughed. "And I'm no longer young. I need to save some money for the future when my future health wanes."

Klein was silent for two seconds before saying, "You can consider buying some insurance, such as a Single Elder Aid Policy. They can give you the money that can at least fill your stomach and a room for you to sleep in every week when you're really old.

The insurance industry of this world had sprouted in the Fourth Epoch. After being promoted by Emperor Roselle, it had matured quite a bit. There were various kinds of insurance such as the various insurances for maritime trade, fire insurance, injury insurance, long-term care insurance in different names, and so on. They were mostly targeted at the rich and the middle-class.

"I know. When I was a worker, I paid a premium of three pence a week, but after I lost my income…" Old Kohler sighed.

His biggest problem now was that his income was unstable, and he wondered when the money he received from the detective would be cut off.

Klein couldn't promise anything either. He pointed outside and said, "Let's go to Liv's house and return the vocabulary book to the girl."

After leaving the room, Klein casually mentioned, "What a joke. I was talking about doing volunteer work the day before yesterday and volunteered to help find Daisy, but she ended up being sent back by the police yesterday. Please don't mention it again, I don't want to be laughed at."

"Alright." Old Kohler agreed first, then he said, "No one will laugh at your kindness."

After walking through the dirty streets, they arrived at Liv's house. Klein saw that the girl who had just been rescued had started ironing again, and he saw that the clothes here were hanging down and dripping with water. It was just as it was before. He was momentarily at a loss as to what to say.

"Daisy." After a while, he said, "Your vocabulary book."

Daisy's eyes lit up, but she was too busy to leave. After busying herself for quite a while, she stopped working and went to the door, thanking him profusely.

After Liv and Freja had also put down their work and come over to express their gratitude, Klein repeated what he had just said to Old Kohler.

After receiving positive responses, he took out the two pounds worth of change that he had prepared and handed it to Liv.

"There will be a reporter coming to interview Daisy tomorrow. This is the advance of the payment he's giving, but don't mention it in front of him; otherwise, things will become complicated. Heh heh, maybe he will give more tomorrow, but not that much."

"This, no—I'm willing to expose that bad guy's evil deeds. I don't want money!" Daisy shook her head.

Klein let out a soft chuckle.

"This is a rule. You can't break rules, understand?"

He looked at Liv and said, "Take it.

"Your belief is right. It's only if Daisy and Freja learn more words and learn more things will you all escape from this situation."

He was going to suggest that Liv's family should move to the edge of East Borough. Customers who could afford to hire others to do their laundry wouldn't live in East Borough, but in the end, he didn't mention it.

He had intended to provide them with more help, but he restrained himself.

There were thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, or even millions of people like Liv and her family in East Borough. Even if one was a wealthy banker who wanted to help them, they wouldn't be able to make a splash. Besides, this was just East Borough. There was still the entire Backlund and the Loen Kingdom.

“…Thank you, and help me thank the reporter for me." Liv was silent for a moment, then she took the money.

Klein didn't stay for long. He quickly left as if there was a ghost that would devour his soul.

After walking outside with Old Kohler, he turned around and suddenly sighed. He said in a low voice, "There has never been a savior…”

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CHAPTER 388
EXPLORING THE DREAMLAND

"What?" Old Kohler asked, not hearing him clearly.

Klein looked at the potholed road in front of him and said in a self-deprecating manner, "Nothing.

"I hope Liv's family can get out of this situation and live in better conditions."

He had indeed voiced out his thoughts. Being one of the inheritors of the Foodaholic Empire's new era, it was perfectly normal for him to think of a revolution, to mobilize the masses, and to change the world. However, when he thought about the details, he felt that he couldn't save himself just by relying on the poor. This was because Beyonder forces existed in this world. Furthermore, they were relatively supernatural and couldn't be resolved simply by firearms. For instance, Sequence 5 of the Mutant pathway.

That was just one aspect of things. Another aspect of things was due to the Law of Beyonder Characteristics Conservation. Due to the limited access to ingredients, Beyonder forces couldn't become commonplace, making it difficult to convert the advantage of numbers into effective combat power. And even if it could be spread, as long as the problem of losing control wasn't resolved, then it would still bring about disaster.

If there weren't any High-Sequence Beyonders, then there would actually be ways to deal with all of this to a certain extent. However, in the real world, not only were there demigods, but there were also Sealed Artifacts that

could kill people without them even knowing how they died. Besides, deities were real and they stood high and lofty.

In this way, the poor would use strikes and street protests to fight back. However, once they took up weapons and established an army, they would be met with an unstoppable counterattack. It wasn't impossible for a large-scale natural disaster to occur, one that would affect people psychologically.

The only ones that were on par with the official Beyonder organizations were mostly secret organizations. Typically, they were related to evil forces, so by joining hands with them, death might not even be the most tragic ending. Therefore, to embark on the path of revolution, the most hopeful road to success was to get the support of one or more Churches.

*How many concessions could be obtained through simple strikes and street protests while still meeting the vested interests of those involved? Bribery would be much easier… However, the incident regarding the True Creator, who almost made use of the miserable situations of the poor to descend upon Backlund, has seemed to stir the Church of the Evernight Goddess and the nobles who were aware of the situation. I can see that from the investigation mission that Mike had accepted and the information provided by Miss Justice… *Klein's thoughts lingered on East Borough, the dock area, and the factory district.

In the end, he couldn't help but let out a laugh and sigh in his heart.

After all the ideas that come to me, it seems that only through the threat of an evil god's descent can the poor's situation be improved.

However, the evil gods are also the ones who can't wait to draw on their flesh and blood, existences that devour their souls; they're the ones most likely to bring a disaster that no one can escape from.

What wonderful irony.

…

In Empress Borough, the opulent villa of Count Hall.

As Dr. Escalante had upcoming matters she had to attend to, Audrey had brought forward her second psychology lesson for the week.

Susie, more excited than she was, had long rushed into the study, even leaving the ball game she usually loved the most aside.

Audrey purposely displayed her curiosity during this lesson, occasionally asking Escalante about psychology related to mysticism.

At the end of the lesson, Escalante finally spoke after some deliberation, "Miss Audrey, we've organized a seminar on this subject. Many members have specialized in the intersecting field of psychology and mysticism. Are you interested in joining?"

"Of course!" Audrey nodded and answered without the slightest sign of hesitation. It perfectly matched her predetermined innocent and curious personality that she had set for herself.

Escalante smiled.

"Remember to keep this a secret. You know that your elders have a strong prejudice against the study of mysticism. I'll bring you there for the next lesson."

"No problem." Audrey gave her consent with a hint of excitement.

After sending off Escalante, whose hair reached her waist, out the study, she closed the door behind her, faced the mirror by the bookcase, and remained silent for two seconds.

Following that, she lifted up her skirt and took a step and did a swirl from a court dance. Then, looking at herself in the mirror, she sweetly smiled and said, "Audrey, you're great!"

Audrey knew that she had taken the first step in entering the Psychology Alchemists. Although the seminar was most likely an outer circle, and there would definitely be a lot of tests to follow, this really made her open the door to the Psychology Alchemists.

In the process, she didn't borrow strength from the outside world, but instead, she relied solely on her observation and performance to perfectly hide it from Psychiatrist Dr. Escalante. Therefore, she was very proud of herself.

"That seminar sounds interesting." Susie leaned over and wagged her tail. "Audrey, can I join?"

Join? Looking at this golden retriever with its wicked round eyes, Audrey immediately sank into deep thought.

She dragged out a terse acknowledgment.

"I can't do it at the moment, Susie. Y-you're too conspicuous…”

At this point, she changed the topic of their conversation and said with a slight smile, "But I can bring you along."

…

On Saturday night, taking his Master Key and his black cane, Klein walked out of 15 Minsk Street. Without the latter, he didn't think that he would be able to return today.

He was going to "find" Dr. Aaron, enter his dream, and find out how the nightmare regarding Will Auceptin came about.

As for where Dr. Aaron lived, he had already found out yesterday—3 Burningham Road, Hillston Borough.

By the time Klein arrived, it was past eleven o'clock and the neighborhood was dark and silent.

After tossing a coin and performing a divination, Klein passed through the outer bars, walked around to the side, and used the Master Key to open up an invisible passage through the wall into the dark corridor.

With his agile steps, he quietly went up to the second floor and hid in an empty guest room.

When it was clear that Dr. Aaron and his wife were asleep, Klein entered their bedroom through the wall.

The first thing he did was take out a Slumber Charm and mutter the incantation, making Dr. Aaron's wife really fall asleep, preventing her from suddenly waking up and disturb what he would subsequently do to her husband.

Then, Klein sat down on a chair in front of the dresser, held the Dream Charm in his hand, and whispered a word in ancient Hermes, "Crimson!"

As soon as he finished saying that, he felt the charm in his palm become light, as though it had become a weightless illusion.

As his spirituality poured in, a transparent flame wrapped around the charm, burning a deep and serene black.

Driven by Klein's will, the blackness spread out, enveloping both Dr. Aaron and himself.

Klein quickly entered a Cogitation state and saw the endless darkness and the single oval-shaped light.

His spirituality extended out and touched that illusory and hazy object.

The world around him suddenly turned upside down and twisted, and Klein found himself on a barren plain, with pitch-black stones at his feet and not even a blade of grass.

In the center of the plain stood a black steeple with a huge silver snake coiled around it. It had its head reared up, and its red eyes stared coldly in their direction.

Unlike what Dr. Aaron had described, the silver serpent had no physical scales, and its body was covered in dense patterns and symbols. They were all connected to each other into what seemed like wheels, and there were different symbols around each wheel.

The giant snake's tail and head's wheels were each halved, looking incongruous, as though they could kill a person with obsessive-compulsive disorder, but Klein imagined that if the giant silver snake could bite its own tail with its mouth, the wheel would be complete. It wouldn't be disconnected, and there wouldn't be any more changes.

Next to Klein, Dr. Aaron stared blankly ahead, moving closer and closer to the dark steeple.

I can now confirm that no one is guiding Dr. Aaron… That excludes Nightmare Beyonder powers… Klein quickly made a judgment.

He didn't stop Dr. Aaron, but he followed him towards the black steeple and the silver snake.

The two of them had only taken a few steps when their target had already appeared before them. The giant silver snake had its upper body bent down, as though it was considering how to enjoy the dessert that was delivered to its mouth.

Its mouth opened wide, but there was no putrid smell coming from it. Its red eyes were cold and merciless, looking at everything like they were

nothing more than prey; yet, it didn't have the slightest hint of bloodlust or cruelty.

In front of it, everything seemed puny and equal because of their insignificance.

In the end, the serpent didn't launch an attack. Klein followed Dr. Aaron through an old, rotting wooden door and into the darkness of the tower.

As Aaron had told him, the layout was abnormally confusing and chaotic. The stairs spiraled up and down, and the halls, libraries, and rooms were normal, inverted, and some were embedded in other parts. It was a building that couldn't possibly exist in the real world.

After passing through the doors and walls, Klein had no idea where he was in the black tower. Perhaps he had reached the top or perhaps the basement.

In the rich darkness, he suddenly noticed a figure curled up in the corner in front of him.

The figure, sensing Dr. Aaron's approach, scrambled to its feet, hopping over on one leg.

It was only when the figure was very close did Klein clearly see him. He looked dignified and strong, in his early teens, and had an expression of obvious fear.

The figure was about 1.4 meters tall, and his left calf was missing. It was obvious that he was the child who had undergone surgery, Will Auceptin.

In his hand was a deck of tarot cards. His pitch-black eyes were filled with surprise and joy, as well as fear and horror.

"Dr. Aaron, a snake wants to eat me!"

Suddenly, he let out a blood-curdling scream as the image of a huge, mysterious silver snake was reflected in his eyes.

Whoosh!

The tarot cards in his hand fell to the ground, leaving only one card tightly gripped in his palm.

Klein focused his gaze over it and saw that there was, similarly, a wheel on the card.

It was the Wheel of Fortune card.

Whoosh!

The dream shattered instantly, and Klein found himself still sitting in a chair in front of the dresser.

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CHAPTER 389
NIGHTHAWK

The crimson moon outside the window was obscured by the clouds, its moonlight that penetrated through the curtain barely outlined the large objects in the bedroom. The darkness and intensity became the main theme of the room.

Klein sat in such an environment and was in no hurry to leave.

He looked at the sleeping Dr. Aaron and began to analyze the images he had seen in the dream.

Will Auceptin eventually held the Wheel of Fortune card in his hand. And in such a dream, everything symbolizes something. It's a revelation obtained by one's Astral Projection… In other words, Will Auceptin's matter is related to fate. Furthermore, that giant silver snake might very well represent the Snake of Mercury. This child might actually be related to a High-Sequence Beyonder, be of the Monster pathway, or some strange Sealed Artifact…

Does his danger stem from the Snake of Mercury or the result of greed due to the strange Sealed Artifact?

But the Snake of Mercury is Sequence 1. It's an existence closest to that of a god. Just its name on its own is an embodiment of "His" high level. It's impossible that "He" can't do anything to a child like Will Auceptin. That Amon who is of an unknown Sequence number—perhaps Sequence 1, 2, or 3—could even invade the space above the gray fog with just an avatar…

This matter doesn't seem to be that simple. There must be a huge secret behind his matter.

At this thought, Klein had already decided to pull back completely.

It's obviously a very dangerous matter. Furthermore, that tarot card might not be a mystical item. What's special might very well be Will Auceptin himself. Yes, apart from having nightmares, Dr. Aaron's troubles are already settled. There's no reason for me to get involved in it. To proactively act on this and challenge the impossible is nearly identical to suicide… Hmm, yes, I must follow what my heart tells me! Klein pushed the surface of the dressing table with his black-gloved right hand and slowly stood up.

Having just entered the dream, he was completely convinced that Dr. Aaron's nightmare came from a revelation that his Astral Projection had received in the spirit world. And that revelation had been deliberately created and provided by a high-level existence. The paper crane was just a tool for locating him.

According to a chapter in the Book of Secrets, Klein could also try to use the paper crane to find Dr. Aaron's Astral Projection in the spirit world and observe the source of the revelation, but he had already decided to not get involved.

Stretching his body, Klein flipped through Dr. Aaron's leather wallet with the last of his curiosity, and he took out the paper crane.

He placed the paper crane on the tip of his cane, and he held them simultaneously. Then, his eyes turned deep as he softly muttered to himself, "Will Auceptin's current location."

After the divination sentence was repeated seven times, a breeze suddenly blew in the room, bringing with it a cool feeling as if it were blowing on one's soul.

Klein let go of his right palm, and the cane stood firm before falling down with the paper cranes, pointing diagonally at the bed.

"There…" Klein frowned and moved to another position. He repeated the divination and successfully received his feedback.

And the intersection point of the two divinations was Dr. Aaron!

Will Auceptin's position overlaps with that of Dr. Aaron… That's interesting… Klein said to himself, amused and amazed.

His curiosity was piqued to the extreme.

Although he didn't intend to get involved in this matter, he wanted to know why there was an overlapping situation such as this.

Hmm… Why don't I bring the paper crane above the gray fog for divination. With the gray fog's obstruction, there won't be any accidents… Klein quickly came up with a new idea.

Since it wasn't convenient for him to summon himself in Dr. Aaron's bedroom, he decided to take the paper crane home first.

He had actually long prepared for this. Before coming, Klein couldn't confirm the seriousness of the matter, and he had hoped to find Will Auceptin, seeing if he had the opportunity to obtain the tarot card. Therefore, he had prepared another paper crane to replace the real one. It made it easier for him to do all sorts of divination, and he could switch it back once the problem was resolved.

As soon as he thought of it, Klein took out the paper crane he had prepared.

He had deliberately folded it above the gray fog, just in case Dr. Aaron had suddenly decided to hand over anything related to Will Auceptin to the Church of the Evernight Goddess, allowing his counterfeit to be divined.

Taking into account the overall picture and the details would make things much easier.… Klein praised himself.

With the help of the faint moonlight, he carefully compared Will Auceptin's paper crane and his, to see if there were any clear differences.

Upon comparing them, Klein immediately fell silent.

His handicraft skills weren't even comparable to a child's…

In fact, they're all paper cranes, so there isn't much of a difference. Mine is only a little cruder. As long as Aaron hadn't studied the original one carefully, then he wouldn't be able to tell that it has been swapped.… Klein muttered silently to himself, took out a coin, and used divination to make a final confirmation.

After receiving a revelation that confirmed this, he put his paper crane back into Aaron's wallet and returned it to its original position. He then took care of the scene, bringing Will Auceptin's paper crane along with him and left 3 Birmingham Road.

With the help of the dowsing rod, Klein successfully returned home. While he was taking a bath, he summoned himself and brought the paper crane along with the Master Key above the gray fog.

Sitting in the quiet and empty palace hall, he picked up the paper crane and carefully examined it for a few seconds, but he didn't discover anything abnormal.

Then, with a pen and paper, Klein wrote the same divination sentence as before: "Will Auceptin's current location."

This time, he switched to using dream divination, and he was pleasantly surprised to see an image appear in the world of the gray fog.

It was a dark room. A strong and dignified Will Auceptin leaned against the desk with the help of a chair by the window, and he looked out at the scenery with his pitch-black eyes.

He held a stack of tarot cards in each hand, and beside them, there was a pile of wooden blocks.

The wooden blocks formed a ring-shaped snake that connected itself from head to tail.

The scene outside the window was just as dark, and there was the faint sound of flowing water.

The dream ended here without a sound. Klein opened his eyes, tapped the edge of the long bronze table with his finger, and he said to himself, *That Ouroboros-like snake is indeed the Snake of Mercury? That means it's the Snake of Mercury which represents fate…*

There was the sound of running water outside the window. Does that mean that Will Auceptin's current position is close to the Tussock River?

Previously, when I divined his position, was the overlap with Dr. Aaron caused due to interference by fate?

Seeing that divination above the gray fog could only receive a revelation of this degree, Klein was no longer troubled by curiosity. He barely interpreted the situation and planned to exchange the paper crane tomorrow night. He would then find an opportunity to guide Dr. Aaron and have him go to the Church of the Evernight Goddess to tell the bishop about this matter.

It's best to leave such matters to the officials… Klein let out a chuckle and returned to the real world.

After taking a leisurely bath, he didn't get busy and crawled into bed.

After an unknown period of time, Klein suddenly realized that he was clearly dreaming. He was in the living room, reading the Book of Secrets.

This… this familiar feeling… He turned his head to look at the door like he usually did.

The door creaked open, and a figure in a gray coat walked in.

He was about thirty years old, with a long, thin face with a broad forehead, and dark blue eyes that looked intelligent.

It's not the Captain… Klein suddenly gave a self-deprecating laugh, let out a silent breath, and turned the Book of Secrets in his hand into a copy of Ladies Aesthetic.

He flipped through the magazine, casually greeting the newcomer.

The man in the gray coat took off his hat and sat down across him, seemingly casually asking him, "Aaron came to see you this morning?"

It's really is a Nighthawk, a Nightmare… Klein resisted the urge to sigh and replied with a smile, "Yes."

He had already figured out why the Nighthawk had suddenly entered his dream.

The Nightmare in front of him was likely the Captain of the Nighthawks team responsible for the matter regarding Will Auceptin, but they had yet to find any useful clues up to date.

In this case, Dr. Aaron and Detective Sherlock Moriarty's act of visiting to ask about Will Auceptin's whereabouts must've been made known to them last night or this morning. At the same time, they discovered that Dr. Aaron rushed over to Minsk Street, shortly after he finished his breakfast, to visit Detective Sherlock Moriarty.

In the spirit of professionalism, entering a person's dream at night was the most natural and normal development. As for Dr. Aaron, his situation was rather sensitive, so rashly entering a dream might cut off clues, so there was no doubt that a certain detective became the first choice.

"What did he encounter?" the captain of the Nighthawks team asked "casually."

Klein answered honestly, "He had a nightmare…”

Klein described the pitch-black tower, the giant silver snake, and Will Auceptin under layers of protection, and other scenes. Finally, he said, "Before this nightmare, Aaron had gone to Will Auceptin's place to find the child, partially because he was worried about his health but also because he was puzzled over his bad luck. Unfortunately, the Auceptin family had moved away. However, Aaron recalled that the boy had given him a paper crane that the boy had folded himself and had wished him luck.

"Perhaps agitated by these two events, he had such a nightmare."

The man in the gray coat looked pleasantly surprised.

"Paper crane?"

"Yes." Klein nodded slightly. "The child gave it to Aaron before he was discharged, and Aaron threw it into his office drawer. He forgot about it until last night."

"I understand. Thank you for your explanation." The captain of the Nighthawks team stood up and bowed with his hand against his chest in a very polite manner.

Suddenly, there was a ripple in the dreamland, and he disappeared from the room.

Looking at the position where he had sat, Klein deduced what would happen next.

The Nighthawks might go to Dr. Aaron's tonight and enter his dream for investigations and take the paper crane away. However, a question arose. The paper crane was folded by Klein, and the real thing was above the gray fog.

Forget it. Regardless of which paper crane they use, they'll never be able to divine the answer. It doesn't matter if I switch it back or not… Klein said to himself.

He gathered his thoughts and continued to sit there. He wasn't in a hurry to leave the dreamland, and he stared blankly for a long time.

After a while, the corners of his mouth curled up as he softly sighed.

How nostalgic…

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CHAPTER 390
ANTICIPATION!

On Sunday morning, shortly after Klein finished his breakfast, he heard the doorbell ring as he had expected.

But to his surprise, it wasn't just Reporter Mike Joseph. Dr. Aaron was with him as well.

"Sherlock, I had that nightmare again last night. I don't think it's normal." Aaron didn't keep matters a secret even with Mike around, revealing it the moment he entered the living room.

Without waiting for Klein's reply, he took out his wallet and took out a paper crane.

"Do you think this is the problem?

"Ever since I found it and started to carry it with me, I've been having nightmares."

Klein nonchalantly glanced at it when his expression froze suddenly. If he hadn't been a Clown in the past and had great control over his facial muscles, then he might've revealed an undisguised smile in front of the reporter and doctor. Yes, a smile.

This… this paper crane is even uglier than the one I made… This was the first thought that came to Klein's mind.

At that moment, he had the urge to cover his face and sigh.

Could having poor handicraft skills be a tradition of the Nighthawks?

There was no doubt that the paper crane in front of him was the result of another switch. After receiving accurate information from Klein, the Nighthawks had seemingly sneaked into Dr. Aaron's bedroom without any delay and switched their folded paper crane for the one in his wallet.

But what they didn't expect was that the one in the wallet was also a fake. It was folded by Klein above the gray fog and appeared rather crude.

I feel an inexplicable sense of joy… Klein glanced at Dr. Aaron, who didn't notice it, cleared his throat, and said, "Perhaps. I suggest that you go to the cathedral again and talk to the bishop you previously talked to. We need to believe that the gods that we believe in are always watching over us."

As he spoke, he drew a triangular Sacred Emblem on his chest.

After the Nightmare had left last night, Klein had specifically gone above the gray fog to divine if it was dangerous having switched the paper crane. The result was that it was very safe. Thus, he was now able to make this suggestion with great interest, in an attempt to tease his former colleagues.

I wonder how they would feel seeing the paper crane that they didn't fold very well return to them… Klein placated Dr. Aaron in all seriousness and turned to the reporter and said with a smile, "Mike, to tell the truth, what I really want to advise Aaron to do is to go see a psychiatrist, but faith can certainly soothe his soul."

"You're not being frank at all." Mike laughed. "All right, let's go."

The next day, Klein accompanied the Daily Observer reporter into East Borough to interview the rescued girls.

With a full pound as payment for the interview, no one refused it, not even some of the abused girls.

In this interview, Capim's sin was the main focus. The current situation of the girls was another main focus. The former made people angry, while the latter left people feeling heavy.

Daisy was actually lucky enough to be able to return to work when she got home and use her labor to barter for food. Less than a third of those who were rescued were like her, and most of them were the kinds with some savings at home, and they were in a position that allowed the traumatized women to heal and have time before they sought out suitable jobs.

As for the other two-thirds of those rescued, they had to continue working hard in order to survive. And in the face of the mass unemployment of textile workers, they were often only able to find temporary jobs with low wages. Those with parents and siblings who hadn't lost their jobs were still okay; at least, they were able to help each other, barely filling their stomachs. The families in less optimistic situations had already begun to walk the path of street girls, as though they had never been rescued. Their act of betraying their bodies once was perhaps only for some food.

This caused Mike to turn silent like before, and it was only when it was dark and once he left East Borough before his spirit returned. He thanked Klein.

"Sherlock, it's all thanks to you. Otherwise, I definitely would've been blackmailed today by those rogue gangsters."

"Isn't that why you hired me?" Klein smiled politely without any complacency.

With Old Kohler informing them beforehand, Old Kohler and Liv's family hadn't revealed that he had helped search for Daisy for free. Especially when Daisy, who was pretty smart, was asked if she knew any relatively special people, she answered directly, "Mr. Reporter and Mr. Detective."

Mike nodded sluggishly and walked on in silence for a long time.

Before he boarded the carriage, he suddenly let out a sigh.

"I would like to make a call in this report for the government to use Capim's estate to set up a bursary fund, which will use the annual income to help the rescued girls and others who have been harmed by Capim to get them out of their predicament.

"Although Capim's safe had already been robbed clean by the Hero Bandit, his greatest wealth is the property he bought. Th-these should have all been obtained illegally."

Klein listened carefully, gave Mike a deep look, and said in sincere praise, "You're the best reporter I've ever met."

"There are plenty of reporters like me. There are always idealists in the world." Mike sighed.

With that, he paid 10 pounds to Klein and took off his hat and waved it.

As he watched the reporter get into the rental carriage, Klein was about to take a public carriage in the other direction when Mike suddenly opened the window and asked with a jibing smile, "Sherlock, I'm not the only reporter you know, am I?"

Klein was stunned for a moment, then he laughed.

"Guess."

…

City of Silver.

Like a trapped beast, Derrick Berg paced around the room in anxiety.

He felt that the Chief wasn't paying enough attention to his report. He was worried that the exploration team members, who had been affected by the

Fallen Creator to an unknown extent, would cause devastating damage to this city that had lasted for 2,582 years in the darkness after their quarantine.

In such a situation, he was eager to obtain advice from Mr. Hanged Man, Miss Justice, and company, who were rather familiar with the Fallen Creator.

This was the Tarot Gathering he anticipated the most.

Wait a little while longer, just wait a little longer. If Mr. Fool doesn't summon me, I will pray directly to him… Derrick tried to calm himself down, but his pacing didn't slow down one bit.

Suddenly, he saw the endless gray fog and heard the messianic voice say, "Prepare for the gathering."

With a sigh of relief, Derrick sat down on the edge of the bed carefully and lay down, pretending to be ready to sleep due to exhaustion.

After silently counting a thousand rapid heartbeats, he waited for a while before he was engulfed by the illusory dark red light.

At that moment, Derrick's room was abnormally quiet. Lightning streaked across the sky outside his window, keeping the darkness away from the land.

Suddenly, by the corner of his bed, a black figure squirmed and extended, taking the shape of a human!

The dark figure quickly grew tall and quietly looked down at Derrick.

He carefully observed him for nearly a minute, then withdrew without gleaning anything.

In the corner, the shadows remained the same, unchanging.

…

The endless gray fog lingered beneath his feet as usual. The long bronze table in front of him was mottled with green rust, but it didn't seem to be rotten at all. The first things that Derrick saw were Miss Justice and Miss Magician sitting opposite him. The familiar, jovial greeting sounded in his ear.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Fool~"

"Good afternoon…”

Klein, shrouded in gray fog, nodded slightly. He seemed to respond leisurely to Miss Justice and the other members' greetings, but in reality, he was busy manipulating The World, making him appear like a real person.

After yesterday's interviews with Reporter Mike, it was already dinner time. Klein went to a restaurant that served Feynapotter cuisine, and he was so overwhelmed by the spiciness that he voluntarily ordered a cup of desert beer.

After eating his fill and returning home, he didn't go out again for the rest of the day. Neither did he study the Book of Secrets or prepare his own food. That eased the heavy emotions he felt whenever he went to East Borough.

Without realizing it, the afternoon had arrived, and his thoughts shifted to the Tarot Gathering.

After the greetings, Justice, Audrey, restrained her curiosity and excitement, and she was in no hurry to inquire about the truth behind the Capim incident.

Mr. Fool might not answer, but how would I know if "He" wishes to answer if I don't ask? Well, I hope "He" makes a request of equal value, and I'll do my best to fulfill it… Audrey looked around at the other members and observed the states of the other members.

As a Telepathist, she very quickly discovered something strange.

Eh, The Sun appears very anxious. Did something happen to the previous exploration team captain? Did he encounter Amon?

In addition, Fors is in an indecisive state of wanting to ask but not daring to… She must've seen the papers and guessed from the tarot cards that our Tarot Club was involved in Capim's death. But she's curious who the Emperor card represents… She seems to be even more in awe of Mr. Fool. What happened?

Mr. Hanged Man seems to be in a very good mood. He's finished digesting his potion… He seems to be anticipating something…

*Mr. World is still as gloomy and reserved as before, and it's hard to read his thoughts. He really is the nemesis of the Spectator pathway… *

Derrick, didn't try to hide his anxiety, but he didn't consult the other Tarot Club members directly.

He knew perfectly well that the initial time belonged to Mr. Fool, unless there were no so-called Roselle diary entries.

There's no need to rush. The gathering has already begun… If Mr. Fool is in a good mood, he might be able to answer some questions… Derrick consoled himself.

Alger looked up and humbly said, "Honorable Mr. Fool, I've found three new pages of Roselle's diary."

Diary? Roselle's diary? Fors pricked up her ears.

Klein smiled and replied, "What do you want to exchange them for?"

Glancing at the card next to Mr. Fool's hand, Alger suppressed his eagerness and said, "I want to know what that card you have next to you is."

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CHAPTER 391
THE GREAT SEAFARER ROSELLE

I know that… Audrey's eyes were half-turned, and her chin was slightly raised. She happily cast her gaze diagonally across her, towards a stone pillar that supported the dome.

She quickly withdrew her gaze, ready to admire the reaction of Mr. Hanged Man after he heard the answer.

Fors vaguely realized one thing: *The so-called Roselle's diary can be exchanged with Mr. Fool for answers to certain questions, and maybe even some items!*

Roselle's diary? Is it referring to the notes that are written with Roselle's unique symbols that no one can interpret? They were actually diary entries? Mr. Hanged Man's tone sounded very firm and Mr. Fool didn't retort him…

I've encountered many, but I've never bought any of them because I wasn't interested. Ah, yes, Miss Audrey has quite a few! She's a fanatic when it comes to this! B-but that dog of hers… last week, no—maybe last week, I don't remember it too well… Basically, it tore up many books and notes, including all of the diary entries from Emperor Roselle!

The sudden surprise and disappointment that emerged had filled her heart and made her want to raise her hands, cover her ears, and scream.

That wasn't enough to express her current feelings!

I hate dogs! Fors bitterly thought.

The Hanged Man's request was somewhat beyond Klein's expectations. However, it was the easiest for him to complete. He chuckled and said, "Sure."

"Do you want everyone to hear it, or do you want to be the only one to know it?"

Alger replied without hesitation, "Only myself."

He didn't have the spirit of selfless devotion to others.

Klein laughed and blocked the senses of the other members, which made Miss Justice very upset. She was waiting to see Mr. Hanged Man's stunned and shocked expression, as though she had done something great herself. Although she couldn't proclaim it out loud, she still looked forward to the subsequent reaction after Mr. Hanged Man knew the answer.

But now, that detestable Hanged Man has deprived me of this happiness! Audrey grumbled inwardly.

Of course, she was very clear that his request was absolutely justified.

But I already know the answer… she pursed her lips and thought.

At this moment, Klein leisurely flipped over the Card of Blasphemy and held it vertically, allowing The Hanged Man to directly see the black-armored, crowned, and caped Roselle.

It was common to see the portrait of Emperor Roselle, so Alger recognized him immediately. More importantly, there was a clear sign on the card saying: "Sequence 0, Dark Emperor!"

Indeed! It's the rumored deck of cards, which contains the paths of the divine, made by Emperor Roselle. It's the original prototype of tarot cards!

Sequence 0, Dark Emperor… Is this the Lawyer pathway to becoming divine? Mr. Fool has been collecting Roselle's diary all this time, apparently in order to find clues to this deck of cards, and in a matter of months, "He" has already acquired one… Alger was surprised and delighted, as well as excited and agitated.

All of a sudden, he inexplicably felt that the future of the Tarot Club was incomparably bright.

Previously, he had only been intimidated by the mysteriousness and potency of Mr. Fool, and he had only held the notion of using the Tarot Club to exchange information and goods. But now, he began to think of the advantages that he and the other members could reap when Mr. Fool managed to collect all of Emperor Roselle's cards.

At that time, the Tarot Club might become the most powerful secret organization! Alger couldn't help but look forward to the future.

Then Klein said slowly, "A Card of Blasphemy."

He then immediately removed the isolation barrier.

As soon as she regained her senses, Justice Audrey immediately turned her gaze towards The Hanged Man. Through the blurred image, she could vaguely "read" the remaining shock, joy, and yearning from the other party.

That's more like it… Audrey was immediately greatly satisfied.

A Card of Blasphemy… Indeed, it's related to the Blasphemy Slate… Alger bowed his head in thought for a few seconds and began to conjure the three pages of Roselle's diary.

Soon, the three yellowish-brown goatskin parchments were in Klein's hands.

He casually lowered his gaze and started reading at a moderate pace.

"15th March. I really am the protagonist. With just some archaeological clues and folklore, I've found a ghost ship left behind by the Solomon Empire in the Fog Sea's boundary at the Aurak Archipelago, the Dark King!

"It's really cool!

"There are some ancient books on it, including a treasure map pointing to some nameless island. That's the final settlement of a great noble of the Solomon Empire who was defeated and left the Northern Continent. Everything that he left behind is there!

"This treasure will definitely belong to me!

"19th March. After much deliberation and consideration, I've finally decided to set out on a long voyage. After that, I'll enter the Royal Army as an officer, so it will be hard for me to have an opportunity such as this again.

"Edwards and Grimm are willing to take the risk and follow me into that foggy sea.

"Actually, I don't just want the treasures. I also wanted to verify something —from the sun, the red moon, to the trajectory of the stars in the sky, as well as the changes in four seasons, all sorts of signs and different data to prove that the world I'm on should be a planet. In that case, it shouldn't only be the Northern and Southern Continents. Based on the various data, the land mass occupied by the two continents totaled up isn't even a tenth of the planet's surface area. Could the rest of it be the sea and islands?

"To the west of the Northern and Southern Continent is the Fog Sea; to the east is the Sonia Sea. I suspect that there are other continents at the end of these two seas, just like how the Southern Continent is at the end of the Berserk Sea. Maybe I can find a brand-new continent, the Western Continent!

"Let's go, great seafarer Roselle Columbus Magellan Gustav, go and verify your conjecture!"

The Emperor sure was reckless when he was young. He actually dared to go on a voyage just because he received a treasure map that he had no clue about its authenticity, or if it held any danger. No, he's as rash as he was when he was young, even in his old age. The Cards of Blasphemy are evidence of this… Klein couldn't help but lampoon.

The diary entry seems to be linked to a page or two that he had seen before, separated by at most one or two other diary entries, so Klein was almost certain that Roselle had lost his way in this voyage and ended up finding a primitive island just outside of the safe sea routes. On it, there were a number of Beyonder creatures. In the process, he had also teased Grimm and Edwards, who were following him to sea, using the memes of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse and the Pirate King.

In addition, Grimm, who had been praised by Roselle as the smartest of them all, became increasingly stranger after discovering the primitive island, and he ended up dying in the Fog Sea.

Speaking of which, the idea that the world is a planet is now widely accepted and confirmed by astronomy… Klein turned to the second page of the diary.

"18th April. I discovered the term Western Continent in an ancient book on the Dark King!

"There really is a Western Continent!

"However, even during the Fourth Epoch, in the Solomon Empire, when the gods were still walking the lands, the Western Continent was only a rumor. Legend has it that it was the homeland of the elves, and it was related to the ancient god named Soniathrym.

"The problem with that is that the elves ended up on Sonia Island and later scattered themselves over the mountains and the numerous islands in the seas, and there is no legend that they have ever tried to return to their homeland.

"In short, the end of the Fog Sea might be the Western Continent, the homeland of the elves. Then, what's at the end of the Sonia Sea? Is there really an Eastern Continent? Where is it hidden in the books of myths? Could it be the ethereal Forsaken Land of the Gods?

"Proceed onward, Roselle. You're about to reach your destination!"

The Western Continent, the Eastern Continent… Roselle guessed that the latter might be the Forsaken Land of the Gods… Yes, Mr. Hanged Man once said that many members of the Aurora Order were searching the Sonia Sea for the True Creator's holy residence. And he suspects that the holy residence is the Forsaken Land of the Gods… This is in line with Emperor Roselle's thoughts… This world has many secrets… Klein lowered his gaze towards the last few paragraphs of the page.

"20th April. All signs indicate that we're about to reach a continent, not the land from an island!

"There's actually a benefit to being lost? Could it be that I've discovered the so-called Western Continent?"

"21st April. I saw the abyss."

Abyss? Did Roselle see the Abyss, the Abyss in the sense of mysticism? Klein's pupils shrank as he quickly turned the page.

But the third page of his diary made him doubt his life and his many years of Chinese education.

It was filled with the following sentences: "Ah, f**k hungry please people in manor."

This… Klein realized that this was probably a subsequent forgery of Roselle's diary entries. They had randomly pieced together a bunch of sentences based on the original "symbols."

At this moment, Klein felt like he was seeing intelligible characters and had the urge to curse those forgers.

He wanted to know if the abyss mentioned in Roselle's diary was the Abyss to which the terms "source of evil," "land of corruption," and "home of devils" referred to.

The true Abyss is the Dark Side of the Universe where even gods can be corroded. It should be independent from the real world, just like the spirit world. At the very least, this is what the Book of Secrets and the books which I came into contact with during my time with the Nighthawks say… If it's not the true Abyss, then what did the Emperor mean by "abyss?" Klein thought about it, over and over again, but was unable to come up with an explanation. He felt extremely dissatisfied, just like when a novel was dropped by the author at the most critical moment.

With a single glance, he calmed down and let the diary entries disappear from his hands.

"You can begin." Sitting at the head of the long bronze table, he chuckled.

Alger turned his head immediately towards The Sun, asking indifferently, "Have you gotten anything from the former captain of that exploration team?"

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CHAPTER 392
LISTENING TO LITTLE SUN'S STORY

Derrick was originally anxious to ask about the Fallen Creator, but when he heard The Hanged Man's question, he answered honestly, "He's dead."

"He's dead?" Justice, The Hanged Man, and The Magician expressed their surprise at the same time.

They really didn't expect this turn of events. After all, the former captain of the exploration team had been locked up for decades without any problems. Who would've thought that he would die right after they discussed about him!?

At this moment, aside from Mr. Fool, only the gloomy and reserved The World maintained his original state.

Derrick nodded and said, "Yes. After I returned to the City of Silver, I wanted to glean more information from the former captain using Mr. Hanged Man's suggestions, but he suddenly appeared behind me, asking me if I was looking for him."

Upon hearing this, Audrey suddenly drew a short breath.

Although The Sun obviously lacked the ability to tell a good story, his simple descriptions still gave her the feeling of reading horror novels late into the night. It was as if someone was standing behind her, also asking, "Are you looking for me?"

Fors was as frightened as she was excited, having found the feeling she had as a child listening to her mother's recount of a ghost story. Despite covering her ears in fear, it felt like someone had possessed her and pried open the gaps between her fingers, allowing the voice to be transmitted into her brain.

*This passage can be written into a novel! *As a best-selling writer, she had outstanding professional instincts!

Alger, being experienced and knowledgeable, subconsciously asked, "Doesn't your City of Silver's dungeon have seals targeting Rampagers? Is there no barrier between them? I remember that last time you said that there was a very powerful and mysterious item at the core."

"Yes, but I don't know how or why he came to my room. He had completely lost control of himself—his head had split open in the middle and fluid kept flowing out. There were many cracks on his body, and each crack was a mouth," Derrick said, describing the scene in passing.

"Then, how did you survive? How did you escape from his, no—its jaws?" Fors felt immersed, and it was also a question which Audrey was concerned about.

Alger's reaction was very different from theirs. He thoughtfully murmured, "It doesn't make sense to put you—a person who only shows signs of losing control—next to such a dangerous fellow.

"From the looks of it, the upper echelons of your City of Silver, the members of the six-member council, deliberately made you interact with him, hoping to gather useful information from him and observe any corresponding changes.

"So, which elder saved you?"

Derrick's mouth gaped a little, feeling as if Mr. Hanged Man had personally seen and heard everything that had happened.

Just based on the situation I described, he was able to guess the truth. How amazing! Derrick answered with admiration, "Yes, just as you said, the Chief appeared just in time and used the mystical item to deal with the Rampager."

Noticing the respect and admiration from The Sun, Alger let out a chuckle.

"It's quite an obvious case. As long as one is experienced enough, you'll easily be able to notice this."

I didn't think of it… Audrey muttered to herself, somewhat depressed.

I couldn't tell… Fors ran her hand through her hair, ashamed.

I didn't think in that direction… The World repeated Mr. Fool's sigh.

After saying that, Alger frowned slightly and slowly asked, "You said that not long after you returned, the former Captain of the exploration team lost control?

"He didn't lose control for decades, but he suddenly lost control after you returned?"

At the same time, Mr. Hanged Man raised his head and looked at Mr. Fool. Seeing that Mr. Fool was very calm and without any hint of abnormalities, his mood immediately eased. All the uneasiness he had just now turned into questions.

The Amon family is known as Blasphemers. Could it be that that person discovered the Tarot Club and the secret above the gray fog, but he was easily finished off by Mr. Fool?

Derrick nodded seriously and said, "I guessed two reasons. One was because I chose the Sun pathway, and you said that the Amon family was the descendant of an ancient sun god. The other reason is that he noticed

that Mr. Fool was pulling me in to attend the gathering, so changes happened to him, and it was proven to be the latter."

"How was it proven?" Alger pressed, leaving no stone unturned.

Someone sensed that Mr. Fool was pulling him in to attend the gathering? Someone can really detect it? How terrifying… As expected of a Blasphemer… Audrey was astonished and shocked.

She couldn't help but glance at the end of the long bronze table, and she was immediately comforted by Mr. Fool's calm and indifferent attitude.

It's just a trivial matter. To Mr. Fool, it's just a trivial matter… Audrey thought with joy and relief.

So it turns out that someone is able to discover the Tarot Club's gathering… As expected, with so many pathways and so many Sequences, there would always be a Beyonder power that can detect this… But for me right now, this is a very bad thing… I'm still too weak. I have to advance my Sequence as soon as possible… Fors was momentarily surprised and frightened.

Derrick truthfully described the events, "I saw Amon's shadow when the Rampager was finished off by the Chief. It should be him. This is what he looks like."

With the approval of Mr. Fool, Derrick conjured a light screen depicting Amon.

A black classic robe, a matching pointed hat, a crystal monocle, a broad forehead, a thin face, black eyes, black curly hair…

"Have any of you seen him before?" Derrick asked hopefully.

The Hanged Man, Justice, The Magician, and The World shook their heads in unison.

Without harping on the matter, Derrick continued, "Amon's shadow was eliminated by the Chief with the help of the mystical item, leaving being a translucent worm.

"The Chief told me that it was only an avatar of Amon…

"He explained to me the reason for arranging it so I lived beside him. After confirming that I was fine, he allowed me to return home. I was a little afraid, unaware of any subsequent actions Amon might take. Therefore, the moment I reached home, I prayed to Mr. Fool…"

"Wait," Alger interrupted The Sun with a frown, "you said that you just experienced such a strange and terrifying incident, and the Chief let you go home just like that? And the moment you returned home, you didn't do anything but first pray to Mr. Fool?"

"Yes," Derrick answered blankly.

What's wrong with that? He found Mr. Hanged Man's attitude rather odd.

Audrey vaguely felt that what The Sun had done wasn't right, but she couldn't immediately figure out what was wrong. She just believed that if she were in his shoes, she definitely wouldn't have done that. But at that very moment, Fors had already covered her face.

Too careless… I was like that in the past, and the price of that was to use up a stone on my bracelet and start bearing the curse of the full moon… The best-selling writer sighed in her heart.

Alger glanced at Mr. Fool again. Seeing that he remained indifferent, he forced himself to relax. He held his fist against his nose and said, "After having such an interaction with that strange Amon, do you think the Chief will just do a cursory inspection and be completely reassured about you?

"If that's really the case, that former captain of the exploratory team wouldn't have been imprisoned for forty-two years.

"In my experience, the Chief has definitely sent someone to secretly monitor you, and you've undoubtedly exposed your own uniqueness!

"Don't doubt this. If the Chief isn't that careful, then there's no way your City of Silver can last till this day under such abject environments."

This… Derrick's eyes widened, being even more convinced that Mr. Hanged Man was truly knowledgeable and that what he said made a lot of sense!

Th-the Chief discovered something abnormal about me? So, that's why he had such an attitude when he heard my report? What should I do? What should I do… Derrick immediately became nervous and frightened.

Noticing his concern, Alger scoffed.

"However, you don't have to worry about it for now. I just thought about it, even if your City of Silver's Chief found out about your abnormality, he would only suspect that you were possessed by Amon, that you've been contaminated by him, and wouldn't think of the Tarot Club. You still have time, so you can slowly think of a way to resolve this problem."

Derrick calmed down a little and honestly said, "Back then, I really was possessed by Amon."

"What?" Alger blurted out.

He nearly left his seat, taking on a combat stance to fend off any accidents.

Audrey and Fors immediately tensed up. Only the gloomy World showed mere surprise.

Startled by the reaction of Mr. Hanged Man, Derrick quickly added, "Mr. Fool discovered it while I was praying."

As he spoke, he conjured the scene which Mr. Fool had sent to him back then. Dressed in a pointed hat and a crystal monocle, Amon's illusory figure

was coiled around his Spirit Body like the ghost of a python.

Seeing Justice and Magician trembling from the bottom of their hearts, The Hanged Man immediately pressed on, "What happened next?"

"Later, Mr. Fool taught me a ritual. Through the ritual, 'He' sent his angel to purify Amon's avatar," Derrick replied without embellishing or simplifying anything.

Angel? The Hanged Man looked in shock at the end of the bronze table.

He hurriedly lowered his head when he realized that his actions were impulsive and impolite.

Angel? Audrey was momentarily left dazed.

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CHAPTER 393
THE WORM OF TIME

After a brief moment of blankness, Audrey quickly understood what The Sun was saying—he was saying that Mr. Fool had sent "His" angel to purify Amon's avatar!

Angel!

Mr. Fool sent an angel!

Mr. Fool really has an angel as an attendant!

*Every angel has at least the power of a Sequence 2… *

Although that's expected and I've already expected it, it's still amazing because it has finally been verified!

*And only deities can control angels! *

Audrey's eyes shone with excitement. She couldn't help but wonder what Mr. Fool's angel looked like.

*I wonder if I'll be lucky enough to see that… *She looked towards the end of the long bronze table with admiration and zeal.

At the same time, her spiritual perception told her that Mr. World, who was always gloomy, had also sat up straight in shock, which pleased her inexplicably.

Fors recalled what had happened to her previously. She had only asked Mr. Fool to interfere with any divinations, and she ended up seeing a twelve-winged archangel descend, enveloping her Spirit Body with its wings.

It really was an angel… Black wings, an archangel with twelve pairs of wings… And this really is just a routine procedure for Mr. Fool. "He" would send an angel to help members of the gathering get out of trouble… Fors suddenly didn't dare to look up at the gentleman who was sitting leisurely at the end of the long bronze table.

Although she was still only Sequence 9, and she hadn't received a complete education in the field of mysticism, she had been involved with different Beyonder circles for three years. She would've learned of certain things even if she didn't deliberately find out about them.

In the midst of all of this, there was a very important clause: "You may not look directly at God."

In the past, this sentence didn't leave much of an impression on Fors, but now she suddenly felt that it was the truth, the truth derived from countless bloody lessons.

Angel? Mr. Fool really does have an angel by his side! The Hanged Man felt a wave of fear and baffling excitement hit him, causing his body to tremble slightly.

Previously, when "He" told us his honorific name and responded to prayers and rituals, this had indirectly expressed the notion that Mr. Fool was equivalent to a god. However, direct evidence was still lacking. But now, an angel has appeared! The existence of that alone is enough to explain many things! Amongst them, the most important thing is that Angels represent the most direct form of deterrence! Mr. Fool is not without influence in the real world… Even if "He" doesn't go through his adorers, "He" can still project his majesty onto a certain region… Alger immediately thought of many things. He broke into a cold sweat for his shallow actions in the past while feeling filled with hope for the future.

Immediately following that, he started to think about the details of what The Sun had said.

Mr. Fool didn't let the angel descend directly. Instead, he taught The Sun a ritual. Through that ritual, "He" sent the angel to purify Amon's avatar. That's quite a roundabout way of doing things…

Does this mean that in order to influence the real world, Mr. Fool must break through many obstacles? This is consistent with my earlier judgment that "He" is in a sealed and confined state… Or perhaps there's something special about the Forsaken Land of the Gods?

The reason why Mr. Fool didn't act like this before was because "He" has escaped a little? "He" is gradually freeing "Himself"…

Sitting at Mr. Fool's seat, Klein slowly looked around. He was obviously aware of Miss Justice's reverence and zeal, as well as the fear and excitement of The Hanged Man.

*Weren't you always treating me like a god in the past? Why are you acting like this after hearing about the angel? It seems like indirect evidence ultimately cannot be compared to the shock and awe delivered by direct evidence… If a new member were to question me in the future, I would make preparations in advance for The World to step forward and say something. Then, I would casually point my finger and kill him as an example to others… Once things calm down, I would make a new The World… *Klein's thoughts gradually wandered.

Derrick didn't quite understand the reactions of Mr. Hanged Man and Miss Justice. From his point of view, wasn't it normal that an angel served a god or a mighty existence?

After pondering for a few seconds, he said, "After Amon's avatar was purified, I coughed out a worm that was exactly identical to the one in the dungeon. Do you know what it is?"

With the help of Klein's help, The Sun successfully conjured a projection of a translucent worm with twelve transparent rings.

Audrey and Fors looked over curiously. At the same time, they shook their heads, indicating that they had never seen or heard of this kind of worm.

Twelve rings… In the Book of Secrets, all similar symbols have something to do with time… The Amon family was descended from an ancient sun god, and in ancient times, people believed that the sun and time were related… This can barely be considered an explanation and can be verified from two angles… However, why is it that the current Eternal Blazing Sun is the Inextinguishable Light, Embodiment of Order, God of Deeds, and Guardian of Businesses, but he doesn't seem to be involved in the domain that deals with time… In order to maintain his image as The Fool, Klein was in no hurry to answer.

He smiled, his gaze warm.

Alger thought for a moment before saying, "It should be the vessel that Amon created for his avatar.

"In legends, there is a type of worm that looks similar, appearance-wise. They have twelve transparent rings and are called Worms of Time. However, no one has ever seen them before. Many people suspect that it's actually the name of a Sequence potion."

Worm of Time… So it's very close to my guess… Although this is just a legend spread among Beyonders at the middle echelons of particular Churches and above, the information itself is of great value. Is Mr. Hanged Man saying this out loud to let others know this because he has been rewarded, having learned a lot of important information from The Sun? Klein felt wistful and amused at the same time.

"Worm of Time… The vessel that Amon created for his avatar…" Derrick whispered to himself, as though he had resolved many of his doubts.

He curiously asked, "What can it be used for? I mean, when it's dead."

"I don't know." Faced with The Sun's trust and respectful gaze, Alger suddenly felt a little ashamed.

At that moment, The Fool, who was sitting at the very end of the long bronze table, spoke calmly, "The main material of certain rituals."

This was what Klein had surmised from the contents of the Book of Secrets.

However, he wasn't worried that he would say anything wrong, because it was almost impossible to prove it.

Failing to find the ritual that requires a Worm of Time just serves to prove that you're not knowledgeable enough! Klein casually added inwardly.

Certain rituals… Audrey and the others instantly let their imaginations run wild.

"Thank you, the great Mr. Fool." Derrick got up halfway and bowed. Following that, the topic steered towards the matter that threatened the existence of the City of Silver. "The exploratory team is back. I'm referring to the team led by Shepherd Elder Lovia. They completed the exploration of the Fallen Creator's half-destroyed temple and have returned to the City of Silver. And I discovered that a few of the team members that I know have undergone a certain degree of change."

"They've been corrupted by the True Creator," Alger didn't hesitate to point that out with a tone of certainty.

The True Creator? Audrey couldn't help but look at the end of the bronze table.

She remembered very clearly that the True Creator had once had its descent foiled by Mr. Fool's adorer. She had even guessed that the leader of their Tarot Club was going to be "The Nemesis of Evil Gods."

"Really?" Derrick returned, refusing to believe it.

The Hanged Man calmly said, "Describe their changes in detail."

"I still feel like he's the same person, but he's very different from before. His original optimism has now turned heavy. There's only a polite smile left from his former bright smile…" Derrick shared everything abnormal that he had discovered, including the sudden improvement in Shepherd Elder Lovia's state.

Alger said in deliberation, "The situation might be worse than you think. Corruption could be the best possibility.

"Now, if they truly believe, from the bottom of their hearts, in the True— Uh, Fallen Creator, that would be trouble, and they would be irredeemable.

"Regardless, their characters, thoughts, and viewpoints would all be warped, turning into hidden lunatics. You can take action from this angle, letting other members of the six-member council notice that something is amiss."

"I've already reported the matter, but the Chief doesn't seem to trust me too much," Derrick said in a slightly aggrieved and heavy manner.

Fors couldn't help but sigh.

"That's because your Chief is suspecting that you're possessed by Amon and planning something nefarious against the City of Silver."

"Then, what should I do? Even if I tell them of the existence of the Fallen Creator, they wouldn't believe me, am I right?" Derrick asked anxiously.

The Hanged Man pondered for two seconds before saying, "In truth, your Chief should've begun paying attention to the Shepherd and the exploratory team members. For your City of Silver to survive to this day, the upper echelons will definitely have the most basic level of vigilance and not

neglect any possible threats. The only problem is that the importance they place on this matter is definitely insufficient; at the very least, it's not as important as their attention on you and Amon."

Without waiting for The Sun to speak, he added after some deliberation, "Perhaps you can use this incident to wipe away the suspicion on you… Find an opportunity to make a particular exploratory team member to show the most thorough extent of an abnormality and enter into a conflict with him. That way, the other members of the six-member council will notice that something isn't right and raise the priority on this matter.

"At the same time, hand over the suspected Worm of Time and say that you suddenly felt your mind be adrift while the conflict was happening and that you had no idea what happened. You only vaguely heard someone shouting 'True Creator,' before you woke up. And by then, you had already coughed out that worm.

"When an evil god is involved, there are many means and abilities that one wouldn't dare use without thought. Your Chief would adhere to logic and guess that Amon's avatar and the mental corruption left behind by the True Creator had entered into conflict, eventually being destroyed and reduced to a dead worm. The surveillance on you would definitely decline significantly. If you act normally for an additional period of time, then the suspicion placed on you would be completely gone."

Why does Mr. Hanged Man seem so well-versed in this aspect… Audrey thought with her mouth slightly open.

Derrick's eyes lit up when he heard this, and he felt that Mr. Hanged Man was indeed trustworthy. He had come up with such a good idea!

"Then, how do I make that exploratory team member display the most thorough extent of his abnormality?" he quickly asked.

Alger fell silent for a few seconds before saying, "I don't know."

He then added, "It would be great if there are items related to the True Creator…”

With a whoosh, Audrey looked towards The Fool who was seated at the end of the long bronze table.

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CHAPTER 394
SIGHTS IN THE SPIRIT WORLD

Klein knew very well why Miss Justice was looking at him. Being aware of the Lanevus incident, she was certain that he had many conflicts, both in the open and in the shadows, between himself and the True Creator, and that it was normal for him to have the corresponding items, perhaps even quite a few of them, in his possession.

Logically speaking, there's nothing wrong with her thinking. In fact, I have crossed the True Creator several times, and I do have an item that fits those descriptions… Klein sighed inwardly.

There was no question about helping Little Sun. There were many monsters in the Forsaken Land of the Gods where the City of Silver was located, allowing the collection of several materials which were rare in the Northern and Southern Continents. In addition, they had a contiguous history that wasn't distorted by any of the deities or Churches. They gave the most objective stories and secrets prior to the Cataclysm, and the knowledge involved was extremely valuable. Whether it was from the perspective of the Tarot Club's leader, or simply considering his own interests, Klein had no intention of giving up Little Sun or the City of Silver unless it was hopeless.

However, there were certain things which weren't suitable for Mr. Fool to voice out.

Just as Audrey was looking expectantly at Mr. Fool who was shrouded in a thick gray fog, The World, who had been silent all this time, finally opened his mouth.

"I have an item that contains the mental corruption of the True Creator."

He was referring to the All-Black Eye that Nimblewright Master Rosago had left behind.

"An item containing the mental corruption of the True Creator?" Alger thought as he organized his words. "This might be able to help The Sun. Once those exploratory team members, whose thoughts and viewpoints have been warped, sense the mental imprint of the True Creator, there's a high possibility that they will mutate right on the spot."

The World looked at The Sun and laughed hoarsely.

"Kid, I can lend you that item, but what will you be using to pay for it?"

Having seen hope, Derrick's mind raced, suddenly remembering what had happened during previous Gatherings and quickly said, "I can help you find the characteristics of the Human-skinned Shadow, the mutated pituitary gland and blood of a Thousand-faced Hunter. I can also attempt to obtain the method to removing the mental corruption on an item left behind by a Rampager. Whichever I get first will be used as payment."

Out of all of the options, the Human-skinned Shadow was relatively easy to encounter. It was one of the scarier monsters in the depths of the darkness.

At this moment, Derrick wasn't considering whether the exchange was of equal value or not. Even though a one-time loan of an item contaminated by the True Creator was obviously not worth as much as the conditions he put forward, under the current circumstances, he could grit his teeth and accept whatever high price The World offered. Thus, he might as well proactively show his sincerity.

The World nodded slightly.

"Very good, I will ask for Mr. Fool's help to lend it to you."

As he spoke, he revealed the shape of the All-Black Eye and added, "It's the equivalent of a Sequence 5 Beyonder. If you lose it, you'll have to provide me with compensation. Also, as soon as this is over, return it to me."

This was what Klein couldn't say in his capacity as The Fool. If a god-level existence like him kept harping about "compensation" and "remember to return it to me," then the status he had built up for himself would have collapsed.

In addition, Klein took into account the hidden dangers that lay in the future.

The All-Black Eye and the other items were all things that he had used in the real world. If he were to bring in a new member who knew of this matter, they could confirm certain matters based on this point. Therefore, allowing Sherlock Moriarty to be equivalent to The World was clearly better than having Sherlock Moriarty be equivalent to The Fool.

When your strength doesn't match your status, all I can do is tremble in fear, as if I were treading on thin ice or facing the abyss… Klein sighed silently.

Seeing that Mr. Fool hadn't refused The World's request, nor did he point out any problems with the deal, Derrick was relieved and quickly agreed to all the demands.

At the same time, Audrey was genuinely happy for Little Sun.

Alger thought for a while before letting out a sigh. He then said to The Sun in a measured tone, "Don't be too optimistic. How to seize this opportunity still needs to be organized. First, you have to choose a time and, without putting yourself in danger, have only one exploratory team member be present while there are several City of Silver citizens, or when they're all in a quarantined and sealed state… You have to use a wall of spirituality to seal the vessel that stores the corrupted item ahead of time and not allow anyone to notice it. By doing that, you can control the development of the

situation… In addition, you need to consider how to hide that item after it's over. You mustn't let the six-member council discover it; otherwise, you'll never be able to clear the suspicion on you…”

If such an easily deceived fellow were to die, it would be difficult for me to obtain any more information regarding the Forsaken Land of the Gods or the secrets of the ancient era… The Hanged Man didn't find it problematic to offer help.

Under his tutelage, Derrick gradually had a complete plan and a few key points to take note of.

"Thank you, Mr. Hanged Man. Thank you, thank you to all of you," he sincerely expressed his gratitude to every member in the gathering. This made Audrey feel the satisfaction of doing a good deed.

The matter of The Sun came to an end at this point, and Fors, who had witnessed it all, suddenly had an idea.

She ruffled her slightly curled long hair and said, "I wish to know which family the Apprentice pathway belongs to. I'm willing to use one of the chapters in the Sights in the Spirit World as a barter. Although the content is considered the ravings of a dreamer, many of the things described in it are true from my experiences into the spirit world."

The Sights in the Spirit World was one of the mysticism notebooks that Mrs. Aulisa had left her. The logic of the content was incoherent, absurd, and just reading it alone left one irritable. However, when her body entered and left the spirit world three times for a variety of reasons, Fors discovered that the records in the notebook might not necessarily just be ravings.

Sights in the Spirit World? Klein leaned back slightly as he controlled The World to answer before The Hanged Man.

"I know the answer, and I can give you some of the corresponding information for free."

He knew very well that The Hanged Man could also answer The Magician's questions.

It's bad to have competition; that's why you need to combine it with free gifts.… Klein silently lampooned.

"Alright." Fors felt a surge of joy.

She discovered that the Tarot Club really was much more high-end than the other Beyonder circles that she had participated in before. Many difficult questions could be answered here.

At this moment, The World asked in a low voice, "Do you want to hear the answer for yourself or have everyone else hear it too?"

Fors pondered for a few seconds, then caught Audrey and the others by surprise with her answer.

"Just say it out here."

In her opinion, the answers to her own questions were of little help to others, and it didn't matter if they found out, and if Mr. World had left something out, or gave an incomplete description, and someone else happened to know the corresponding content, then she would be able to use the same Sights in the Spirit World chapter to obtain the full picture.

She believed that it was more important that way.

The World wasn't surprised and said in a low and hoarse voice, "In the Fourth Epoch, the Apprentice pathway was wielded by the Abraham family. Later, it was spread to the Tamara family which had been in marriage alliances with it for extended periods of time. In the Fifth Epoch, which is the present epoch, the Theosophy Order also has the Apprentice and Trickmaster potion formulas. They're widely believed to be related to the Abraham and Tamara families. Of course, there are also people who suspect that the Theosophy Order is actually a guise of the Demoness Sect."

Considering that Miss Magician had already met with members of the Abraham family, Klein added via The World, "It is said that the Abraham family has suffered a bloodline curse all this time. They have no choice but to take up residence separately from each other in order to avoid danger."

Bloodline curse? Fors's eyes widened as she thought of her encounters.

*Mrs. Aulisa's husband belonged to the Abraham family, and that Mr. Lawrence is also a part of the Abraham family? Is that why she said that as long as one isn't a member of the family clan, they wouldn't suffer the curse. However, I used the bracelet, and it belongs to the Abraham family? *Once again, regret gnawed at her soul.

This was the first time that Alger and Audrey was hearing about the bloodline curse of the Abraham family. Both of them had their own thoughts, so no one spoke up for a short period of time.

After a while, Fors took a deep breath and said, "Thank you, Mr. World. You have answered the biggest question I have.

"I will copy the first chapter of the Sights in the Spirit World after the end of this Gathering and sacrifice it to Mr. Fool. Is that okay, Mr. Fool?"

The Magician is a descendant of the Abraham family? It's no wonder her body can enter and exit the spirit world… She likely possesses a corresponding mystical item… The Hanged Man suddenly looked at her.

Fors is a member of the Abraham family? She was born in an ancient family dating back to the Fourth Epoch? Audrey nodded as if she was thinking about something.

After receiving a positive reply from Mr. Fool, Fors relaxed and began mentioning her desire to buy the Beyonder ingredients—stomach pouch of a Spirit Eater and the blood of a Deep Sea Marlin. Unfortunately, The Sun wasn't going out during this period of time, so there was nothing. As for

The Hanged Man, he merely mentioned that he had clues to the Deep Sea Marlin's blood.

No one had obtained the formula for the Wind-blessed potion yet. On the other hand, Audrey wasn't in a hurry to purchase the Psychiatrist formula because she was about to join the Psychology Alchemists.

Klein originally wanted to sell either the Werewolf Beyonder characteristic or Biological Poison Bottle, but after considering the latter's compatibility with his Spirit Body state and the current financial situation of the members, he temporarily gave up on that idea.

The transaction segment quickly ended, and the gathering reached the stage where each of them could share information they had heard about.

Audrey slowly looked around and said with a slight smile, "Last week, an interesting case happened in Backlund. The protagonist is called the Hero Bandit Dark Emperor."

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CHAPTER 395
THE SHERIFF BEYONDER CHARACTERISTICS

Dark Emperor? The Hanged Man, who was casually listening to Miss Justice, suddenly raised his head. His gaze suddenly became sharp and piercing.

He had just learned that the card in Mr. Fool's hand was one of the Cards of Blasphemy created by Emperor Roselle; the name of the card was Dark Emperor!

Does this have to do with Mr. Fool? Alger quickly glanced at the end of the long bronze table, before immediately lowering his head.

If it was really done by Mr. Fool's adorer, this definitely isn't a simple matter… Alger listened attentively to Miss Justice's subsequent descriptions.

Fors, who had long since learned of this from Xio and had some predictions about it, also gave The Fool a glance. She wanted to see the truth from the concealed entity's reaction, but The Fool remained as calm as ever in the thick gray fog.

Audrey, who wasn't able to glean anything either, paused for a moment, then continued, "The victim is a tycoon, Capim. Many rumors point to him being the biggest human trafficker in Backlund. Hero Bandit Dark Emperor infiltrated his villa and robbed him of his life, rescuing many innocent girls who were locked up in his underground dungeon.

"When Capim's corpse was discovered, it was covered with a deck of tarot cards. His face was covered with the cards, Judgment and The Emperor."

She didn't mention the safe as she found it unimportant.

Covered with tarot cards? Is that the symbol for when our Tarot Club takes action? Wait a minute, a human trafficker? Alger sharply noticed a phrase.

He turned to the end of the long bronze table and humbly asked, "Mr. Fool, is Capim related to the disappearance of the colonial slaves?"

The latter was a mission had been assigned to him by the Church of the Lord of Storms, and he had formerly targeted a suspect named Baelen and had asked Backlund residents—Justice, The Magician, and The World—to keep an eye out for him.

As a result, upon hearing the word "human trafficker," Alger intuitively believed that it had something to do with the disappearance of many tribes on the Southern Continent and the flight of many slaves from many islands in the Sonia Sea.

He felt that only a matter such as this, which seemed to hold some secrets, could interest Mr. Fool.

Of course, it cannot be ruled out that it was an independent act by Mr. Fool's adorer. He couldn't possibly be waiting for everything to be arranged like a manipulated puppet… Alger thought.

*Capim has something to do with the recent disappearance of the colonial slaves? On second thought, that's not a possibility that can be eliminated. There were four Beyonders in his villa, and that in itself isn't normal in the first place… Even if a tycoon like him were to hire Beyonder bodyguards, then he would only be able to get a Sequence 7 and two Sequences 8s or 9s at most. Back then, Harras, together with his mystical items, was equivalent to a Sequence 5 expert… *The Hanged Man's words jolted Klein's thoughts as he felt that the matter could vaguely be linked together.

However, he wasn't sure about his theory, and he could only disregard The Hanged Man's question. He chuckled and said, "My adorer made some minor contributions in this matter."

*As expected! *Audrey's eyes shone brightly as she cheered in her heart.

As expected… It's the first time that I encountered anything to do with the Tarot Club in real life… Fors was half happy and half wistful.

Alger believed that Mr. Fool's words were an indirect confirmation of his conjecture.

Capim was definitely not a simple human trafficker. Otherwise, he wouldn't have caused a hidden existence's adorer to take action. Therefore, there was a strong correlation between the human trafficking and the disappearance of the slaves, both were matters that weren't simple.

Without waiting for Miss Justice to speak, Klein lightly tapped his finger on the edge of the ancient long table and leisurely added, "He obtained two Beyonder characteristics from this matter and wishes to sell them as quickly as possible. The two characteristics correspond to Sequence 8 Sheriff, and the other is Sequence 7 Interrogator.

Sheriff, Interrogator… Aren't those from the Arbiter pathway which is controlled by the Augustus family? Only members of the royal family, ancient nobles, and the military could possibly acquire them… Capim had one of them backing him? Not excluding the possibility of the Feynapotter Kingdom's Castiya family… Alger frowned, feeling that the disappearance of the slaves wasn't as simple as it seemed.

Audrey's thoughts were similar to his. She had never thought that the Beyonders at Capim's villa would be from the Arbiter pathway.

It's impossible that the faction in control of the corresponding formulas would collude with a human trafficker like Capim… Audrey pursed her lips slightly, puzzled and confused.

Sheriff? Fors, who knew that her good friend, Xio, was saving up for the potion ingredients for this Sequence, sat up hurriedly and asked in puzzlement, "Mr. Fool, what are Beyonder characteristics?"

That's not what I expected. Shouldn't you directly ask me how much it is? That's right, I don't think I've ever told Miss Magician about the Law of Beyonder Characteristics Indestructibility and Conservation… Klein was taken aback for a moment, and then he began to consider his tone.

And at that moment, Audrey spoke out on his behalf.

"Mr. Fool, may I answer the question? The corresponding payment shall be paid directly to you."

She and Fors are friends, and she had volunteered out of the fear that Mr. Fool wouldn't share that knowledge again.

"No problem." Klein smiled in response.

Miss Justice is always able to worry about the things that trouble me… He sighed with emotion inwardly.

Phew. Audrey breathed a silent sigh of relief and turned to face Fors. She deliberately didn't use the pronunciation and unique vocabulary of a noble to say, "Do you want to know the answer?

"What are you willing to pay?"

Fors nodded without hesitation.

"Of course!"

She looked at the figure shrouded in gray fog and respectfully asked, "Mr. Fool, can I use another chapter of the Sights in the Spirit World as payment?"

She specifically emphasized "another" because she knew that the chapter she would give to Mr. World would be first sacrificed to Mr. Fool, and the knowledge that could be viewed at any time didn't seem to have any value for a transaction.

It wasn't to say that she suspected that a mighty figure like Mr. Fool would peek. She just felt that it was more sincere to change the chapter.

Sometimes, a mighty figure only cares about your attitude… Fors had read such things in many novels.

Leaning back in his chair, Klein replied in an unconcerned tone, "Sure."

"Thank you, Mr. Fool." Fors said, unable to suppress her smile.

She instinctively believed that she had come into contact with certain secret high-level knowledge!

Audrey was completely relieved as she smiled faintly.

"In the Beyonder world, there is a law. Remember, it's a law.

"In similar pathways, the total Beyonder characteristics are conserved, never reducing or increasing. It will only move from one entity to another, changing from one form to another.

"Therefore, after the death of a Beyonder, their characteristics will be separated and become equivalent to the main ingredient of a potion. Oh, apart from the remains of Rampagers. There are too many latent troubles with those, so they can only be made into items."

After the death of a Beyonder, their characteristics will be separated and become equivalent to the main ingredient of a potion? In that instance, it was as if lightning flashed through Fors's mind, allowing her to understand many things.

It turns out that the remains Mrs. Aulisa left me was her Beyonder characteristic… It turns out that in the eyes of others, every Beyonder is equivalent to walking ingredients… That's really dark… Fors clenched her fists tightly, feeling that the Beyonder world was essentially filled with madness.

However, she didn't feel disgusted by the fact that she had become a Beyonder because she had consumed the Beyonder characteristics left behind by Mrs. Aulisa. Instead, it gave her a faint sense of warmth.

After losing her mother, before she met Xio, Mrs. Aulisa was the person who treated her the best. For Fors, it was a sad but warm experience for her to inherit Mrs. Aulisa's remains and be with her forever.

"So that's the case. The Law of Beyonder Characteristics Indestructibility and Conservation… That means the characteristic left behind by a Sheriff Beyonder is equivalent to all the main ingredients?" Fors asked an additional question to verify her thoughts.

"Yes." Audrey also thought of Xio.

Fors immediately stood up and bowed to the mysterious existence that was looking down at everything.

"Mr. Fool, can you get your adorer to reserve the Sheriff's corresponding Beyonder characteristic? I wish to buy it, but I temporarily lack the funds. Please give me another week, is that fine?"

"Sure." Klein took on an attitude as though he didn't care.

Fors heaved a sigh of relief and quickly asked, "How much does your adorer wish to receive in gold pounds?"

The price of a corresponding Sequence 8 Beyonder ingredient is around 300 pounds… Klein smiled.

"600 pounds."

After naming the price, he immediately switched topics, showing that he didn't care about a Sequence 8 Beyonder characteristic.

He looked around and conjured a few goatskin parchments.

"This is the meaning of a portion of Roselle's secret symbols. It's considered free knowledge, making it easier for you to collect the diary entries in the future."

The information included numbers and dates.

The reason why Klein had taught the members of the Tarot Club this information was that he was afraid that they would later end up buying counterfeits.

With the knowledge of dates, they'll be able to eliminate most counterfeits… Klein chuckled inwardly.

Audrey and the others were pleasantly surprised, never expecting to gain such knowledge. Although they had already discovered that the secret symbols on the goatskin were the simplest ones, they all believed that this was a good start. With a first time, there would be a second time and a third time!

After a short exchange, Klein said in a gentle tone, "Let us end today's gathering here."

"By your will." Audrey, Alger, and the others stood up at the same time and bowed.

The crimson rays of light dissipated, and the ancient palace above the gray fog returned to its former tranquility. Only Klein was left sitting alone on the high-back chair belonging to The Fool.

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CHAPTER 396
GREAT WHITE BROTHERHOOD

After returning to the real world, Fors sat at her desk and lost herself in thought about the Abraham family for a while. She had a whole new understanding of the few words mentioned in the mysticism notebooks she had.

So that's how it is… It's no wonder Mrs. Aulisa didn't wish to inform Mr. Lawrence of her and her husband's death… Now that I think about it, the Abraham family is really pitiful and sad… Fors muttered a few sentences to herself before rummaging and taking out Sights in the Spirit World from a pile of ordinary books, in preparation to copy the first and second chapters.

For this, she entered Cogitation and adjusted her breathing in order to be in her optimal condition. Otherwise, just copying the contents of Sights in the Spirit World would bring her mania and confusion.

The words clearly didn't have any spirituality, but once they were combined together to describe those ridiculous scenes, it was as if they had the ability to affect her emotions… I need to take a five-minute break after every five minutes of copying it. I don't want to lose control because of this… Fors took out her small, intrinsic pocket watch and placed it diagonally in front of her desk.

…

In the Berg household in the City of Silver.

Derrick woke up as a flash of lightning which illuminated everything flashed in his eyes.

He looked around, but he didn't feel like he was being monitored.

But The Hanged Man's precise description of the prior events, through reasoning and his deep confidence, convinced him that his conjecture was correct and that there had to be one or more Beyonders with particular powers that were secretly monitoring him at that very moment.

Besides, Mr. Fool didn't deny it… Derrick got out of bed and stretched his body like he usually did.

During this process, the analysis and suggestions, that The Hanged Man had given him, rapidly surfaced in his mind.

"Up till now, no one has come looking for you or has chosen to throw you into the dungeons. That's enough to tell us that your Chief and the other elders of the six-member council are still leaning towards observing. They wish to find a way of evacuating the entire City of Silver out of the forsaken land through Amon, the first person they've encountered in more than two thousand years.

"So, if you don't do anything out of line, they definitely wouldn't rouse you so that Amon wouldn't notice anything amiss.

"As such, their surveillance wouldn't be too close, physically; at least not when you're awake.

"And because of this, they probably didn't discover that you've already coughed out that Worm of Time. Their subsequent reactions are enough to indirectly prove this.

"Similarly, they should only be able to observe what kind of ritual you held, but they won't be able to figure out who you're praying to. If it were me, I would definitely suspect that it was related to Amon.

"Due to the above reasons, you can openly hold the bestowment ritual. After all of this, you can push the blame onto Amon. Of course, you have to pretend to be sufficiently cautious and careful. You have to be prepared to undergo the examination of a Psyche Analyst and other Beyonders of other Sequences when everything is over. Regarding this matter, you can seek Mr. Fool for help…"

With The Hanged Man's suggestion, Derrick walked around the table twice, carefully closed the window, lit a candle, and set up a bestowment ritual.

…

Above the gray fog, within the towering, ancient palace.

Klein was staring idly at the stone pillars that supported the dome, feeling that the building he had willed resembled an Athens temple.

*Is it because of my own subconscious? *his thoughts wandered.

At that moment, the dark red star corresponding to The Sun began to emit light, and it quickly dispersed the ripples to form an illusory and mysterious door. Above the gray fog, a small amount of power was stirred up as it flowed like water.

Upon hearing the stacked pleas, Klein lowered his head and looked at the All-Black Eye placed in front of him.

Let's hope Little Sun doesn't lose this. Otherwise, Mr. World would have to be gloriously sacrificed…

It was precisely because he had the All-Black Eye that Klein, who wasn't a Nimblewright Master, could secretly control The World as a fake person, allowing him to act as if he was made of flesh and blood.

Once the item was lost, he would have to let The World die to prevent the "magic" from getting exposed.

While sighing, Klein emanated his spirituality, stirring the power of the fog into flowing towards the illusory door, forcefully pushing it open slightly and stabilizing the transmission channel.

Soon after, he placed the All-Black Eye into an iron box and threw it into the gap of the mysterious door. He casually said, "Do not touch the item inside."

After doing all this, he didn't stay any longer, because he knew that Little Sun wouldn't be able to find an opportunity to take action that quickly, and he was unsure when Miss Magician would be able to finish copying the two chapters of Sights in the Spirit World.

Relaxing his spirituality, Klein's figure disappeared from the space above the gray fog.

…

In the Berg household in the City of Silver.

As soon as Derrick saw an iron-black box on the altar, he heard Mr. Fool's familiar voice: "Do not touch the item inside."

Do not touch.… Derrick made a note of this reminder and decided to carry it out to a tee.

After thanking The Fool and Mr. World and ending the bestowment ritual, he opened the box with extraordinary care and examined the contents.

It was a completely black eye without a pupil. Just looking at it threw his mind into chaos, and his thoughts became sluggish. Faint, indistinct, and seemingly crazy ravings sounded in his ears.

After a sudden shiver ran through his body, Derrick closed the lid of the iron box, picked up a silver dagger, and completely sealed the iron box with a wall of spirituality.

Then, he put the iron box into a secret pocket on the inside of his clothes, fixed the Axe of Hurricane in place and left the room, heading straight for the training field.

The exploration team members were still under the disguised quarantine.

However, Derrick had no plans to take action today. He carefully followed Mr. Hanged Man's instructions and planned to observe the situation first and patiently wait for an opportunity. Of course, if there was a good opportunity, he would have to act decisively.

Upon entering the training field, Derrick circled around the exploration team's area and saw that they were gathered in groups of two or three, whispering to each other, but once they noticed that someone was watching, they would immediately stop and stand there in silence. At times, they would take a few steps, like zombies that had just crawled out of the darkness.

*What would they do if I removed the wall of spirituality now and allow them to sense the feelings emanated by Mr. World's item? Will they turn their heads at the same time to look at me? *Derrick imagined the scene of everyone turning their heads and looking at him with cold and emotionless eyes, and he felt a baffling, indescribable fear.

He drew a breath and told himself to be patient, to wait, and not to panic.

…

City of Silver, at the top of the spire, in a room that belonged to the Chief.

Demon Hunter Colin Iliad, who was resting his mind with his eyes closed, looked towards a dark corner.

A human figure stood up from the ground with a twisted posture. It swayed slightly and said with a voice that sounded like metal abrasions, "Your Excellency, Derrick Berg has held another ritual. According to my

observation, it's likely to be a bestowment request ritual. It's very similar to the sacrificial rituals we usually hold, but what's different is that he received a response and was given an iron-black box.

"I couldn't exactly see what was inside, but it gave me a very evil and dangerous feeling."

At this point, the shadow urgently pleaded, "Your Excellency, it's definitely directed by that mysterious person. We have to take action and not let this continue unheeded! Otherwise, Derrick Berg will summon an evil god or a similar existence sooner or later, destroying the entire City of Silver!"

Colin's expression became unusually grave. He stood up and slowly paced up and down, saying, "Let's wait a little longer.

"Up till now, we still haven't figured out the purpose of that mysterious person who called himself Amon. We don't understand why he only sent one avatar to the City of Silver after discovering it, as well as the goal of patiently staying in the underground dungeons for forty-two years.

"If his intention is solely to destroy us, he wouldn't have done such incomprehensible actions.

"Just wait a little longer. This might be our hidden hope, the hope for us in surviving the apocalypse when it comes!"

Just as he finished his sentence, a bolt of lightning flashed past the window, illuminating the pitch-black sky and the gloomy room.

…

When it was almost evening, Klein finally received Miss Magician's prayer and obtained the first two chapters of Sights in the Spirit World through the sacrificial ritual.

When he sat in the seat that belonged to The Fool, he leisurely flipped through the copied notebook, and he read them, line by line. He was stunned to find himself turning increasingly irritable.

What's happening? Those words clearly don't contain any spirituality, and the paper is ordinary as well. It couldn't be a Sealed Artifact, so how can it affect my state of mind? Furthermore, I'm above the gray fog, a fog that can even sever the influence of a true god… Klein frowned, leaned back, and carefully recalled the information in the Book of Secrets which had similar phenomena.

Not long after, he roughly understood the reason.

When certain existences were described in detail, even if it was written in text form, it would still affect the reader's thoughts and psyche!

Amongst them, the scariest were records related to true gods.

A book explaining a particular god in detail would cause every reader to go crazy or even distort their ideologies. As for Beyonders, there was a high chance of them losing control!

Sights in the Spirit World was written by a certain ancestor of the Abraham family. He had recorded all the strange and wonderful things that happened when he traveled through the spirit world.

In the first chapter, he described the lights in the spirit world. He believed that the seven rays of pure light of different colors contained the limitless knowledge of different domains, and that no matter where the travelers were in the spirit world, they would be able to see them blanketing higher elevations.

What was even more surprising was that these seven rays of light were alive! They were like Spirit Bodies that lingered there!

In the field of mysticism, many of the secret deed rituals were actually aimed at the seven pure lights, and through their secret connections, they allowed one to gain a certain amount of knowledge. Therefore, many mysticism experts called the seven pure lights "master" or "teacher."

In response to this, the seven pure lights seemed very happy. They had even pulled quite a few spirit world creatures to form a secret organization that specialized in teaching people—the Pure Light Brotherhood!

In the second chapter, the traveler from the Abraham family recorded his encounter with the "Yellow Light," Venithan.

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CHAPTER 397
APOCALYPTIC PROPHECY

Relying on the power of the mysterious space above the gray fog, Klein quickly recovered a good state of mind and continued to read the second chapter of the Sights in the Spirit World.

The traveler of the Abraham family, the owner of the notebook, claimed that when he wandered into the depths of the spirit world, he met an elder dressed in lemon-yellow robes.

The elder's body was translucent and was abnormally similar to the surrounding creatures of the spirit world, but his attitude was surprisingly amiable.

The traveler from the Abraham family conversed with the elder for a while, and he was surprised to find out that the elder was actually one of the seven pure lights that blanketed the spirit world at the highest elevation—"Yellow Light" Venithan.

Venithan told the traveler of the Abraham family that his own characteristics were reason and adaptation, that he was the symbol of astromancy, and that his corresponding gem was emerald.

He made a rather anxious reference to a prophecy that came from himself.

"Focus as the stars fall from the cosmos, shattering the lands. Everything in the world will cease to exist."

He believed that this would be the end of the world within two hundred years. Nothing would be spared from this.

The traveler from the Abraham family didn't have much of a reaction towards this comment. Instead, he asked how he could remove the bloodline curse of his family.

"Yellow Light" Venithan told him that in a certain sense, it was indeed a curse, but it had a completely different nature from the curses in mysticism. The solution was in the future, in the hands of an Apprentice who was assisted by a hidden existence.

He also warned the traveler of the Abraham family that the day the curse was lifted was the beginning of the Abraham family's true doom.

As for what the tribulation was, he said that he wasn't so sure himself. He believed that it involved a great existence on the level of gods.

In the second chapter of Sights in the Spirit World, the owner of the notebook mentioned something else—Venithan mentioned another matter. The rulers of the Great White Brotherhood would often enter the real world, and through different methods, transform into humans and teach the knowledge of their respective domains. Since the Fifth Epoch, many of the mentor-level characters of different domains were their incarnations. For example, the greatest astrologer, D. Forssmann, in the last thousand years had proved that their current world was a planet. He was none other than the human incarnation of Yellow Light, Venithan.

Based on this, the owner of the notebook raised a theory. Which Pure Light's incarnation was Roselle Gustav, who could be considered a mentor in many fields?

No, he wasn't… If you really want to think like that, then he's probably a Green Light… Klein raised his hand and rubbed his temples.

Based on this, he judged that the owner of the notebook wasn't an extremely ancient Beyonder. However, judging from the fact that the person didn't address Roselle as Emperor, this tour of the spirit world had likely taken

place during the period when Roselle was still a consul, or when his proclamation as an Emperor was still not widely recognized.

Of course, it didn't prevent the possibility that Beyonders of the Abraham family refused to recognize any Emperor other than the Tudor Emperor.

A traveler who can roam the spirit world. It must be quite a high Sequence. If he were a High-Sequence Beyonder, Mr. Door would've long been rescued, and the so-called bloodline curse would no longer exist. Thus, the owner of the diary would be a Sequence 5 Beyonder or a Sequence 6 with a mystical item… Although the Abraham family has declined, they aren't weak either… Why is "Yellow Light" Venithan's prophecy similar to that of the Demoness Sect and the Aurora Order? The apocalypse is coming? From the period that I predicted, the apocalypse should only be two to three decades from now? Klein frowned as he thought.

Roselle became consul in 1173, and it was currently November 1349, 176 years away, and "Yellow Light" Venithan had predicted back then that it would be within two hundred years. Considering the fact that Klein had only made an estimate of the period interval, it was possible that he was 24 to 50 years from the apocalypse (Roselle proclaimed himself as Emperor in 1192 and was assassinated in 1198).

Although the first two chapters of Sights in the Spirit World didn't provide any practical knowledge, it had thoroughly opened up his sights, allowing him to understand the situation of the spirit world to a certain extent, as well as the existence of the seven Pure Lights and the Great White Brotherhood.

So, when advancing, the pure lights seen at extremely high elevations after transforming into a Spirit Body state and holding the corresponding ritual are the Pure Lights of the spirit world. Furthermore, they are alive with their own thoughts… How miraculous…

The first two chapters of Sights in the Spirit World aren't completely lacking practical knowledge. At the very least, I know that Yellow Light's real name is Venithan and that his corresponding gem is emerald. I got to learn a lot

of detailed information, and I can use this to design secret deed rituals that point towards him… But for the time being, it wouldn't be of much use…

Klein thought for a moment, then he closed the copied notebook and returned to the real world.

He had more important things to do instead of communicating with "Yellow Light" Venithan.

Klein took out a piece of paper, raised his pen, and wrote a letter to the inventor, Leppard, asking what stage of the patent approval process the bicycle was, why it hadn't been successful, and if he needed a lawyer to help him. With the establishment of the Magician's rules, the thorough digestion of the potion wouldn't take him more than two months, and he had to save up as quickly as possible for the corresponding costs of the Beyonder ingredients that are needed for him to advance to a Faceless.

Of these, The Sun might be able to offer one item for free because of the All-Black Eye, but the other item required Klein to figure it out for himself.

As far as he knew, the corresponding Beyonder ingredients for Sequence 6 were all over 1500 pounds and were typically in a situation where demand stripped supply.

In addition to the two main ingredients, the supplementary ingredients included the blood of a Thousand-faced Hunter and the hair from a Deep-sea Naga. These two items were extremely rare and rich in spirituality, making them expensive.

*Earning money really is difficult, but spending it is easy… If only I could sell the Werewolf and Interrogator Beyonder characteristics… I can't even waste a single penny or soli… *Klein sealed the envelope and adhered a stamp on it.

He knew how much he had without even needing to count.

624 pounds in notes and five one-pound gold coins, plus seven soli notes and some copper pennies.

Right. Miss Magician will pay 600 pounds for the Sheriff Beyonder characteristic meant for Miss Xio. I hope they can raise the money as soon as possible… Klein silently cheered the two ladies on.

…

"You're telling me that a Beyonder circle you recently joined has both Beyonder ingredients of the Sheriff potion, and the price is very reasonable. 600 pounds for all of it?" Xio widened her eyes as she delivered a barrage of questions.

She had just come back from East Borough to find out who had recently been keeping tabs on Capim.

"Yes, he's a very reputable seller. The only problem is that the verification process for joining is very strict, so I won't be able to rope you in for a short period of time." What Fors said was entirely the truth.

"That's great!" Xio didn't suspect her friend, but she took two excited steps forward.

Suddenly, her expression sank.

"But, I don't have enough money…”

The corners of Fors's lips twitched as she asked, "How much do you have now?"

"Counting the thirty-pound deposit received from this job, a total of 310 pounds, so I'm still short of half!" Xio scratched her short blonde hair. "Let me think, let me think of where I can borrow 300 pounds… The bank won't give a bounty hunter like me a loan, and those usuries have way too much interest… Perhaps Miss Audrey?"

She had heard from her friend that she had recently bought the Trickmaster potion recipe for 450 pounds, so she had no intention of borrowing money from Fors.

"Why are we all so poor?" Fors couldn't help but sigh. "Miss Audrey rarely comes out these days. She seems to be busy with other things, and borrowing money from her isn't always a timely thing to do. Uh… We can try Viscount Glaint first. If it's too late, then I'll help you pay for the rest. I have 430 pounds; that's enough."

Xio blinked her eyes and suddenly lowered her head. She said in a heavy voice, "Fors, you're the best.

"When I advance to Sheriff, I'll earn even more money!"

Fors smiled and shook her head.

"So, why don't you do the cleaning today? How about that?"

…

City of Silver.

Derrick left the training field and returned home.

He had just inquired about when the exploratory team members would be released from quarantine, and he had received the answer: "When the lightning calms today."

Sitting down at an ancient wooden table, Derrick considered the plan again, remembering Mr. Hanged Man's reminder: *"If there's no suitable audience to testify for you, then you might as well use the Beyonder who's monitoring you."*

But how do I know when I'm being monitored… Mr. Hanged Man said it with great certainty, but he wasn't detailed enough… Many questions arose

in Derrick, but he couldn't find a way to verify them.

Although he felt embarrassed to ask Mr. Fool for guidance on this question, upon considering the fact that this matter was related to the survival of the City of Silver, he mustered his courage.

He spoke the name of The Fool in a low voice, and he briefly described the difficulties he had encountered.

After a while, he saw Mr. Fool sitting in the middle of the endless gray fog. He heard a concise reply: "Touch the item in the iron box. Do not exceed three heartbeats. Prepare yourself in advance. Pay attention to the origins of the black lines."

That simple? Derrick thanked Mr. Fool in pleasant surprise.

He adjusted his posture and quietly put his hand into the inside pocket of his clothes.

As the wall of spirituality was lifted, Derrick's fingers pushed open the iron box and carefully probed inside.

Suddenly, he touched an ice-cold item, and the black illusory lines appeared in front of his eyes.

At the same time, his mind buzzed, as if an illusory roar was tearing through his ears.

Derrick's body convulsed, and tears and snot streamed down his face due to the pain.

He almost forgot what he had to do, but fortunately, in the limits of his vision, he saw the illusory black lines converge.

In that dark corner, there appeared to be a shadow!

Derrick withdrew his hand at once, as though he had touched a red-hot soldering iron.

He collapsed to the ground and began to twitch as if he had been struck by lightning. His mouth couldn't close at all, and saliva constantly dripped from it.

It took nearly a minute for Derrick to recover, close the box again, and seal it with a wall of spirituality.

He stood up and took a sip of cold water, already aware that someone was monitoring him at that very moment.

After an unknown period of time, Derrick suddenly heard a knock on the door.

"Who is it?" he asked, slightly at a loss.

A jovial voice came from outside.

"It's me, Darc. The exploratory team has been removed from quarantine.

"Weren't you interested in knowing about our experience this time?"

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CHAPTER 398
ALLURING MUSHROOMS

*Darc? *The image of Darc appeared in Derrick's mind.

He was of medium height, slightly plump, and strong. He was an optimistic, cheerful teenager who often beamed with a friendly smile. He was a classmate during general education and a teammate of the patrol squad.

But after this exploration of the Fallen Creator's half-destroyed temple, he had become reserved and merely smiled at everyone.

Once he recalled Darc Regence's changes, Derrick couldn't help but quiver as he felt a chill down his spine.

Why did he suddenly come looking for me? Shouldn't he be heading home after being removed from quarantine? At that moment, many questions arose in Derrick's mind.

Suddenly, he thought of a possibility.

Elder Lovia knows that I've suspected that something abnormal had happened to them, so she sent Darc to deal with me?

Derrick was first shocked and filled with horror. But immediately following that, he felt that it might not be a bad thing.

Mr. Hanged Man said, "if there isn't a suitable audience to testify for you, then you might as well use the Beyonder who's monitoring you." And now, the person monitoring me is in that corner. If Darc were to suddenly attack

me, then he would definitely expose the fact that there's something wrong with him!

This way, even if I don't use Mr. World's item, I can still make things go smoothly!

Derrick turned his head to look out the window.

At that moment, the frequency of the lightning had dropped to its nadir. Only after a minute or two would a bolt of lightning streak across the sky, illuminating half the sky. The entire world and most of the City of Silver was immersed in a deep darkness most of the time.

If he were alone, Derrick wouldn't have searched for a candle to light. He liked to lie quietly in bed and think about all sorts of things.

Of course, he knew that this was actually rather dangerous. If there was no light to dispel the darkness, then monsters could suddenly appear, even within the City of Silver. However, Derrick was a Light Suppliant himself, so he came equipped with the attribute of light and wasn't afraid of something similar happening.

Knock! Knock! Knock! Darc knocked three more times, as if urging the master of the house to open the door.

He wasn't like that before; he was very polite… Derrick suddenly felt a deep sense of sorrow.

He took out a candle from a wooden box and placed it in the middle of the table. He then rubbed his fingers, creating a golden flame.

The flame lit the candle, filling the room with a faint but warm glow, and this was accompanied by a faint, pungent aroma.

The candles in the City of Silver were mainly made from the fat and oil refined from the bodies of monsters. They would have different smells due

to their different origins.

After taking a deep breath, Derrick walked to the door with a strong sense of vigilance and opened it.

"What took you so long?" Darc asked with a smile.

"I was looking for candles," Derrick replied.

He didn't dare to leave his back to the other party, and he chose to walk side by side with Darc. With his classmate and teammate, he walked back to the table and took their respective seats.

"Do you want to try some of these recently dried Doom fruits?" Darc asked with a smile as he removed a small cloth bag from his waist.

Doom fruits were one of the very rare snacks in the City of Silver. It came from a plant called the Doom Blood Vine, a type of organism that didn't need light to grow. It grew by absorbing the nutrients from rotten corpses. It had a tendency to attack and was considered quite a common weak monster.

Every Doom Blood Vine had many thumb-sized black fruits, which could be eaten directly. They were crispy and sweet, but they were unable to fill one's stomach and didn't provide the necessary nutrients. They could only be used as a daily snack. The merit points received from a single patrol could be exchanged for several large bags of them.

"No, there's no need." Derrick shook his head cautiously.

"Alright then," Darc poured out a pile of black fruit from the bag, picked one up, and popped it into his mouth before noisily munching on it.

Derrick thought for a moment and took the initiative to ask, "Did you encounter any monsters in the underground area of the temple?"

Darc stopped chewing and answered with a smile, "There were quite a few of them, but they weren't that powerful. They were easily eliminated by us. That place was destroyed for a long time, so the powerful monsters probably left a long time ago."

He paused for a second, then he said with the corners of his mouth curled, "We found some strange plants at the bottom of the temple. They looked like mushrooms in the general knowledge class. They were especially bright and looked very appetizing.

"It's been confirmed that they're edible. They can bring about an enhancement in one's spirituality and strengthen one's body. If it's combined with roasted monsters, then it will emit an unimaginable fragrance."

As he said that, he took out a palm-sized mushroom-shaped object from another small cloth bag. The stem was milky-white, and the cap was bright crystalline red. It was also dotted with dark golden spots.

The mere sight of the plant made Derrick gulp a mouthful of saliva, as though he had been starving for days.

Under the illumination of the dim candlelight, the beautiful mushroom-shaped object had an alluring luster that whet his appetite in an irresistible fashion.

"Here's one for you." Darc smiled warmly.

"Okay, okay…” Derrick almost took action immediately as he picked up the mushroom-shaped plant to stuff it into his mouth, but in the end, he forced himself to open his mouth and say, "I'll give it a try tomorrow."

Darc didn't say anything else. He pushed the mushroom in front of Derrick and continued to eat his Doom fruits.

With great difficulty, Derrick moved his gaze away from the "mushroom" and asked, "Did you make any discoveries on this expedition?"

"Yes!" Darc paused his snack-eating and held a black Doom fruit, replying extremely seriously, "We found a lot of murals, a continuous series of murals. Do you remember that statue in the temple?"

"Yes." Derrick shot a glance at the "mushroom" and nodded. "A huge cross with a naked man nailed to it while hanging upside down, and its surface was deliberately smeared with a lot of blood."

Darc fiddled with the Doom fruit in his hand and said, "The newly discovered murals tell us that the builders of the temple believed that the statue represented the Lord who created everything, the omnipotent and omniscient God. They believed that the Lord didn't abandon this land, but instead helped us shoulder the vast majority of our sins when the Cataclysm came; thus, turning from an upright position to upside down, from walking freely to being nailed to the cross and bleeding in our stead.

"God's grace knows no bounds. We are not the abandoned, but instead, the beloved chosen ones. Without the Lord bearing our sins and shedding blood in our stead, the City of Silver would've been destroyed long ago. Humans would've long ceased to exist!"

But, in the outside world, in the Loen Kingdom where Mr. Hanged Man, Miss Justice, and the others are located, there are no curses, no extreme darkness, no monsters lurking in darkness… We aren't the chosen ones who are beloved… Derrick silently retorted inwardly.

"If that's true, then we just need to change the symbols and the corresponding honorific name during a ritual, and we can receive the Lord's response again…" Darc went on, describing the murals under the temple and speaking of his speculations. As this went on, Derrick found it increasingly difficult to resist the temptation of the "mushroom."

No, I mustn't eat it! If I eat it, I might end up like Darc and the others, completely corrupted by the Fallen Creator and become a fanatical believer… Even if there's someone monitoring me, they wouldn't notice

anything amiss… Derrick felt a surge of horror that he had to do something to extricate himself from the situation.

Chase Darc away and return the "mushroom" to him? However, this is equivalent to giving up on this opportunity… Opportunity… Derrick's gaze automatically fell on the yellow candle flame that was burning quietly.

"I'll get you a glass of water." He quickly went through the plan he had discussed with Mr. Hanged Man and calmly stood up.

Darc nodded as he threw the black thumb-sized Doom fruit into his mouth, munching at it noisily.

While Derrick poured the water, he deliberately slowed down his actions, lowered his head, and recited the honorific name of Mr. Fool. Finally, he said, "Your devoted servant prays for your attention.

"I pray for you to take his offerings.

"I pray for you to open the gates to your Kingdom."

Whoosh!

A strong gust of wind blew up inside the room as the power of nature, generated under the incantation's influence, formed clear waves.

At the same time, Darc, who had just picked up a black Doom fruit, suddenly raised his head and looked at Derrick, who was facing him from the side.

"What happened?"

Without answering him, Derrick held one hand over the Axe of Hurricane and stuffed the other into his secret pocket, removing the wall of spirituality on the exterior of the iron box.

Derrick cast an exceptionally guarded gaze at Darc, only to see the expression of his classmate and teammate darken as bright red traces appeared in his blue eyes!

In his hand, the Doom fruit strangely shed its outer darkness and transformed into a seemingly pale, fleshy color.

It wasn't a Doom fruit, but a finger, a bloody finger, a human finger!

The pile of Doom fruits on the table were comprised of human fingers!

The brightly colored "mushroom" had also changed its appearance. It was no longer as beautiful, and it no longer flowed with an appetizing luster. It was a bloodstained scalp with short black hair!

Staring at Derrick, Darc opened his mouth, his voice cold and adrift.

"What were you doing?"

…

Backlund, 15 Minsk Street.

As soon as Klein, who had crawled into the warm world under his quilt, heard what sounded like a prayer from Little Sun, he struggled to get out of bed and conjured a wall of spirituality. He then took four steps counterclockwise and went above the gray fog.

Seated in the seat that belonged to The Fool, he didn't hurry to examine Little Sun's request. Instead, he made the Dark Emperor card, paper figurines, and other items appear in front of him on the long bronze table in a neatly arranged order.

According to The Hanged Man's plan, the scene of The Sun stimulating the mutation of the exploratory team's member would happen during a sacrificial ritual. That way, when the matter was concluded, it would be

quite simple to make the object, that was borrowed from The World, disappear from the scene, wiping away all the evidence. After that, all the blame could be pushed onto Amon!

As for Mr. Fool, Klein had agreed to Little Sun's request to simplify the ritual in an uncaring manner. All that was needed to be done were the key steps.

At this point, he was waiting for the prelude to the ritual to be completed so that he could respond.

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CHAPTER 399
THE CORRUPTED

In the Berg household in the City of Silver.

Looking at the bloodstained scalp, Derrick suddenly recalled what it previously looked like. It was a beautiful and alluring "mushroom," one that he almost couldn't control himself from swallowing.

The Doom fruits, that Darc had shared with him and produced crisp, crunchy sounds when they were bitten into, were actually bloody pieces of human fingers with slightly pale skin!

At that moment, Derrick had a violent spasm in his stomach before a gush of acid surged to his throat.

Resisting the urge to vomit, he quickly croaked a line of lyrics, "God, please have your kingdom descend upon this land. Your enemies will disperse, and your followers will relish in joy!"

There was a touch of warmth and holiness in the song, and Derrick felt all the discomfort in his body weaken. His spirituality also became full and lively.

His courage, his strength, and his agility were all greatly enhanced by this song.

That was the Beyonder powers of a Sequence 9 Bard.

Darc stared at his former classmate and teammate singing with an increasingly dark expression. The way he spoke became more and more

inhuman.

"What is that thing on your body…

"What is that thing on your body?

"What is that thing on your body!"

All of a sudden, Darc's clothes were stretched out in bugling strips, as though a nest of slithering venomous snakes was underneath them.

*Whoosh! *Bloody strips of flesh pierced through the black skintight clothing, and its surface had rough skin covered with hair.

Strands of meat began to flail outwards, causing Darc to look like a bloody, furry hedgehog!

With a swoosh, the meat strands surged towards Derrick, who was still standing at his original location.

Derrick was a patrol squad member who had seen quite a number of monsters, so he wasn't too flustered by this situation.

He twisted his waist, raised his arm, and swung the Axe of Hurricane that he was already holding in his hand.

Oof!

The Axe of Hurricane hacked down at a few bloody strands of flesh, directly splitting them in half and causing them to fall to the ground.

However, because it was "nighttime" in the City of Silver, this strike didn't bring about any lightning. Even more bloody strips of flesh began to surge forward, wrapping themselves around the Axe of Hurricane over and over again as they relentlessly clung to it.

Seeing that his weapon couldn't be pulled back, a pure light suddenly lit up in Derrick's eyes. It was as if two small suns had descended into the room, and his other hand was holding something close to his mouth and nose as if he was praying.

Without a sound, a fiery pillar of pure light descended from the sky, striking the bloody flesh that was wound up into a ball.

Darc let out an uncontrollable scream, and many bloody strips of flesh fell to the ground, charred black.

They squirmed, struggling as if they were alive.

The spirituality contained within these bloody strips of meat was no longer under the control of its original owner, and gradually, they merged with the natural power derived from the sacrificial ritual's incantation, forming an increasingly bright pink "wave."

This "wave" surged into the dim yellow candle flame, causing the light to suddenly burgeon, forming an illusory and mysterious door.

Derrick had long drawn The Fool's secret symbol on the candle!

This was all prepared in advance.

All of this constituted a simple but complete sacrifice ceremony!

Kacha!

As the seat shattered, Darc lunged at Derrick while flailing the bloody strips of meat. There was no fear or tension in his eyes, only the purest, most fervent desire.

At this moment, Klein, who was above the fog, responded.

With a creaking sound, the illusory door that had many strange patterns on it opened a tiny crack.

Behind the crack was a deep darkness in which countless transparent and indescribable shadows resided.

High above these shadows were seven pure lights of different colors that contained endless knowledge.

Above the brilliance was an endless grayish-white fog, and above it was an ancient palace that overlooked the gray fog.

Suddenly, a shadow leaped out from a dark corner, covering Darc who was closest to him.

Darc's flailing strips of bloody meat were all wrapped up by pitch-black, viscous liquid as he seemed to turn into a cat who had entered an opaque bag.

The shadow didn't stop, and it quickly extended across the ground, rushing towards Derrick, who had already dodged to another location, and shouted sternly, "Stop! What are you trying to do!"

As an observer, his original plan was to watch from the sidelines and record the corresponding anomalies. He would only take action to stop the two strange parties when the situation became unmanageable.

But when he saw the illusory door covered with strange symbols open up with a crack, he felt intimidated by the deep, mysterious, distant, and majestic scene inside. He instinctively believed that this was related to a terrifying evil god, so he could only take hasty actions, giving orders in an attempt to forcefully interrupt Derrick's attempts at performing a sacrifice to that being.

However, Derrick had already chosen his location to be as far from the shadow as possible; therefore, to stop the boy who was possessed by the

mysterious Amon, the "shadow" observer had to bypass or take down Derrick Regence first.

However, his choice was the latter. Because of the obvious abnormality with Darc. Leaving his back to this being was an absolutely stupid move.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, Derrick took out the iron box from his concealed pocket and threw it towards the illusory door conjured by the candle flame, towards the crack that presented a magical scene.

As the iron box disappeared, the door, that was covered in strange symbols and characteristics, closed with a "clang," before quickly vanishing.

At this moment, Derrick remembered Mr. Hanged Man's words, and he deliberately warped his facial muscles and savagely moved towards the "shadow."

Before the "shadow" blanketed him, he suddenly coughed violently and covered his mouth with his hand before falling to the ground.

The pitch-black shadow emanated and completely covered him.

The room returned to silence, but there were now two huge black "chrysalises" on the ground.

After a while, the pitch-black, viscous liquid withdrew and reformed into a shadow.

With the "chrysalis," the silhouettes of Derrick and Darc appeared once more.

The former lay there unconscious, but a tiny, strange worm with twelve transparent rings dropped from his hand. The latter had already turned into a lump of flesh, squirming and roaring as it prepared to attack.

Faced with this situation, the observer had no choice but to spare some of his strength and once again wrapped him up, using his shadow-like black "liquid" to envelop Darc Regence, who had transformed into a monster.

Glancing at the scattered pale fingers and the bloody scalp with short black hair, the observer couldn't help but take a deep breath. Using his Beyonder powers to control the shadows outside, he created tidal waves to inform the Chief inside the spire.

Only after doing this did he carefully examine Derrick's situation and saw the strange, translucent worm.

"This… the avatar that Amon hid in Derrick's body is dead?" the observer muttered in surprise.

As he recalled Darc's strangeness, the terrifying mutation, and the "mushroom" and "Doom fruits," he began to have a rough idea of what had happened.

Perhaps Amon was archenemies with the mastermind behind Darc's corruption. In order to foil the other party's ploy, Amon was willing to sacrifice his avatar. Derrick's visit to the training field to observe the exploratory team and his report of them to the Chief were both Amon's attempts to rid his enemy without exposing himself.

The mastermind behind Darc's corruption had noticed Derrick's strangeness, so he sent Darc to take control of him. The bloody scalp and fingers were props to achieve his goal.

As he thought of this, the monitor suddenly agreed with the Chief's concern —the apocalypse or an even greater disaster was about to befall the City of Silver. That was why the City of Silver would repeatedly encounter so many strange events and mysterious existences that lurked deep in the darkness.

…

Inside the Chief's room at the spire.

The "shadow" recounted everything that had happened.

The grizzled, facially-scarred Colin Iliad nodded gently after hearing the recount.

"Derrick or should I say, Amon, had really prepared ahead of time.

"The candle with the symbol engraved on it, the evil object that can expose Darc's problem, and Derrick's excuse of pouring water to whisper a prayer, as well as finally sending away the item in a sacrificial ritual—all of this indicates that the entire situation developed according to his plan.

"Two questions. One, who does the hidden symbol on the candle refer to? Amon himself or the god behind him? Two, why is Amon willing to expose the exploratory team's abnormality at the cost of his avatar? Is it because he's archenemies with the mastermind? Then, why did he stay in the City of Silver for forty-two years?

"Could it be that he foretold this matter ahead of time, which is why he specifically met with the exploratory team from forty-two years ago and planted his avatar in them so as to foil the plans of that mastermind? He waited forty-two years for that single moment?"

Upon hearing the Chief's questions, the "shadow" observer suddenly said in enlightenment, "Maybe that's how it is!

"Your Excellency, think about it. Why would Amon patiently wait for forty-two years before making Uddel lose control when Derrick was imprisoned beside him? It's because the foretold time was approaching, and he was in desperate need to switch to a free person that he can latch onto so as to foil the plans of that mastermind!"

"Indeed… We were only thinking about what was different with Derrick, and we didn't pay attention to the timing," the City of Silver's Chief Colin

answered in thought.

The "shadow" observer immediately said, "Your Excellency, please immediately lock down all members of the exploratory team. They're definitely problematic! Also… Elder Lovia, she has a nontrivial possibility of also being corrupted!"

Colin frowned and said, "Before you reported this matter to me, and even before Darc went out, Lovia came to me and told me that she suspects that the members of the exploratory team had been contaminated by something. She recommended that we secretly monitor them and if necessary, have them guard Elder Hawick's inverted mausoleum."

Hawick was the former Chief of the City of Silver, and he had built himself a mausoleum. After that, he lived in that mausoleum, and his appearances began to slowly decrease. Finally, the doors were closed, impossible to open again.

"Elder Lovia had long mentioned of an abnormality?" the "shadow" observer asked in surprise.

After receiving a positive answer, he muttered to himself, half-doubtful and half-relaxed, "It's good that Elder Lovia doesn't have any problems…”

“…I've already sent people to lock down the members of the exploratory team, but we can't ignore any other possibilities." Chief Colin let out a sigh. " Let Aiflor come to me. I'll interrogate Derrick Berg together with her."

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CHAPTER 400
THE GROWTH OF THE “ROOKIE”

In a dark and sturdy room, Derrick Berg, who had feigned unconsciousness, suddenly rolled to his feet.

His Axe of Hurricane had already been taken away by someone and sent for inspection. Every pocket on him had also been emptied out, leaving nothing behind.

Derrick took a breath and looked around steadily.

Suddenly, his eyes lit up with two sun-like beams, causing everything in the room to be reflected clearly in his eyes.

The furniture here consisted of only a table and two chairs. Apart from these, there was also a stone-paved floor with strange patterns on it.

A half used candle was placed on the table. This was standard issue for rooms in the City of Silver because monsters could suddenly appear if the darkness prevailed for too long.

Without any hesitation, Derrick sat down and reached for the candle.

Then, he broke the candle and divided it into three sections—one was three-quarters the length of the original piece, and the other two were halved from the remaining quarter.

After Derrick's modification, the three candlesticks' cores were completely exposed.

Pa!

He rubbed his fingers together, creating a golden flame that lit up the three candles.

The two at the top represented Mr. Fool, and the remaining one symbolized Derrick himself.

After finishing his preparations, Derrick didn't continue to burn the herbal powder according to the normal processes. Instead, he poured in the essential oil and leaned back, softly chanting the honorific name of The Fool and quickly entered Cogitation.

He read it over and over again, monotonously, as if he were hypnotizing himself.

With the help of Cogitation, Derrick entered a strange state where his mind was in a deep sleep and the spirituality was dispersing. He felt adrift, but also seemed to maintain a strange lucidity. His psyche kept dispersing upwards as it rose in height.

This was "artificial sleepwalking."

Derrick, with the permission of Mr. Fool, could simplify some of the unnecessary steps.

…

Above the gray fog, within the towering, ancient palace.

Klein, who was fiddling with the All-Black Eye, suddenly saw the crimson star that symbolized Little Sun burgeon with light, condensing into a human shadow, and the power of the mysterious space was stirred a little.

Upon seeing this, he couldn't help but feel relieved. This meant that Little Sun had already completed the relatively dangerous part of the operation,

and he only needed to "round up" the situation.

Klein didn't delay, and he immediately put down the All-Black Eye and picked up the Dark Emperor card.

He instantly rose in level and authority, forcing the stirred power in the gray fog to submit to him.

Then, he picked up a paper figurine, flicked his wrist, and threw it towards the crimson star corresponding to The Sun.

The paper figurine and the flowing power intertwined and quickly expanded into a gigantic angel with twelve pairs of pitch-black wings.

The angel pierced through the crimson light and overlapped with the illusory figure of Little Sun.

It silently combusted, turning into ashes in less than a second.

At this point, Klein could no longer affect the situation of the City of Silver. As for whether his "angel substitute" could help Little Sun pass the subsequent inquiries and investigations, he lacked absolute confidence. He could only sigh inwardly.

With what has to be done completed and with all the hard work put in, all you can do is wait for fate's arrangement. Hopefully, it will be a good result…

…

In a daze, Derrick saw an angel descend before him with an aura that covered the heavens, wrapping him with twelve pairs of black wings.

He suddenly came to his senses as three candles burned quietly in front of his eyes.

After sincerely thanking Mr. Fool, Derrick finished the ritual and extinguished the two candles which were part of the original quarter.

Then, he pulled them out and created a bright, golden flame in his palm.

*Drip, drip, drip. *The two candles quickly melted, dripping its wax onto the remaining candle or the area surrounding it.

When the candle burnt away completely, there was only one candle left on the table. It was shorter than before, but it wasn't very obvious. It seemed like it had only been burning for a short time.

After removing the remaining traces, Derrick extinguished the last yellow-flamed candle.

He sat up in silence, staring ahead. For a long time, he didn't do anything.

He was worried that the six-member council wouldn't react fast enough, allowing the exploratory team members to corrupt more residents of the City of Silver with "mushrooms" and "Doom fruits."

He was afraid that the Chief and the others would find additional clues elsewhere, thwarting all his preparations.

He hated those "outsiders," who lurked in the depths of the darkness, constantly carrying strong malice, including Amon and the Fallen Creator.

He felt guilty that he had avoided the expedition without warning Darc and the rest, causing them to turn into corrupted monsters.

He had painfully eliminated a classmate who could be considered a friend with his own hands.

Although Derrick didn't see Darc's ultimate end, he believed that a man who had transformed into that state was already no different from dead.

Derrick didn't know how long he waited while experiencing those mixed feelings. Midway, he even rekindled the candle.

Finally, he heard the sound of the seal being removed and the door opening.

Turning his head to look, he saw, with the aid of the dim yellow candlelight, a woman in a black skirt walk in. She had her hair tied up in a ponytail and it hung down to her vest.

"Ma'am Aiflor," Derrick subconsciously called out.

Aiflor was a pretty woman, but she had wrinkles at the corners of her eyes. She smiled and nodded in response, then she walked over with light footsteps and sat down across him.

"Do you have anything you wish to say?" she asked gently.

Derrick instinctively lifted his head and looked over, only to suddenly discover that her pupils had somehow turned into golden vertical slits.

His mind went adrift as he seemed to enter a sleepwalking state.

Aiflor adjusted the candle flame, letting the dim yellow light completely shine on the boy's face.

Her pale golden pupils became increasingly indifferent, just like an emotionless audience.

Suddenly, rings after rings of faint light appeared in those pale golden vertical pupils. It seemed to form a vortex and constructed a maze.

In his stupor, Derrick felt himself drifting away into the endless darkness and countless bright colors.

At that moment, he suddenly became clear-headed. He felt as if something had ingeniously caught him in that state of reverie.

He saw the flickering yellow candlelight and Aiflor sitting across him with her pale gold vertical pupils.

In a corner's shadow, a grizzled Chief, Elder Colin Iliad, walked out.

After nodding to the Chief, Aiflor asked Derrick, "What have you been doing all this time?"

Derrick remembered his training and maintained the same state of mind as before.

"I don't know. I've always been in a daze as if I was in a dream. Only occasionally will I have clearness of mind…”

At the same time as his reply, two complex dark green symbols appeared in Demon Hunter Colin's eyes.

Aiflor continued, "Do you know that you had a conflict with Darc Regence?"

"I only remember that we were fighting… I felt like I had seen a man hanging upside down on a cross and a man in a pointed hat and a crystal monocle. Yes, I saw him back at the dungeon… He had opened his mouth and spoke with a smile…” Derrick told a long story.

Aiflor looked at the Chief and pressed, "What did he say?"

"I can't remember. I can only remember one thing… He said with a smile, 'Fallen Creator, True Creator… Shepherd… '" Derrick almost failed to control his excitement.

He had taken such a risk just to tell the Chief the name of the Fallen Creator and that a Shepherd was suspicious!

"The Fallen Creator… The True Creator… It matches with the content on the murals at the bottom of the temple." Colin nodded slightly and whispered

with a frown, "Shepherd…”

"And then?" Aiflor's voice remained abnormally gentle.

Derrick answered in his stupor, "After that, they clashed, and there was a lot of light, very bright lights. Then, I woke up and kept coughing…”

The dark green symbols in Colin's eyes didn't fade this entire time as he motioned for Evelyn to ask about the details.

Derrick answered selectively, and he had pushed the blame onto Amon according to his script. He claimed amnesia on anything that went beyond that.

Finally, Aiflor asked, "Where did you get the axe? Where did you get the Sun pathway's potion formula?"

"I bought the axe from an underground market. That person was masked, and I could only tell that he was male… The Sun pathway potion formula was left to me by my parents. They had discovered it during an expedition…” Derrick answered confidently.

These were points of suspicion that had always been there, so The Hanged Man had assumed they were bound to ask them while he was questioned. Therefore, he had made Derrick to repeatedly rehearse the answers.

Although the City of Silver's underground market was semi-open, there were still people who tried to conceal their identities for a variety of reasons. This provided the best explanation for Derrick.

After Aiflor finished seriously listening to him, she turned her head sideways to Demon Hunter Colin and said, "He's not lying. There's no way he can lie. I'm using the powers of Glory Crown.

Colin nodded his head and said, "In this state, he doesn't show any traces of evil, degeneration, or corruption."

Discovering these traits was a special ability of a Demon Hunter.

As a High-Sequence job, Demon Hunters were the best at concealing their movements and intentions, making it impossible for them to be detected by targets who could foretell danger.

Therefore, every Demon Hunter was a Devil's nemesis.

After some thought, Colin got up and left the room. He said to the shadow in the corner outside, "I'll release Derrick later. I think he's fine for the time being.

"However, secretly monitor him for a while. If Amon is able to produce two avatars, he might be able to create a third."

"Yes, Chief," the shadow responded respectfully.

After Derrick "woke up," the interrogation chamber was empty, with only words informing him that he was free to leave.

He secretly heaved a sigh of relief as he began walking out. While doing so, he thought of Mr. Hanged Man's advice:* "You can't relax just like that and end up careless. The secret surveillance will definitely continue for some time; otherwise, your Chief is lacking!"*

Yes, I can't even recite the honorific name of Mr. Fool anymore for the time being… Derrick muttered to himself as he walked down the spiral staircase.

As he was walking, he suddenly saw a familiar figure dressed in a purple-striped black robe. It was the beautiful Shepherd Elder Lovia.

Her pale gray eyes swept over Derrick, and a gentle smile appeared on her face.

…

Back in her room, with an indifferent expression, Lovia walked to the desk and unfolded a piece of parchment that was made from leather.

Her left hand pinched the index finger of her right hand and snapped the tip of her finger. However, not a single drop of blood dripped. It was as if her blood had been gathered onto the surface of her finger.

With this finger, she drew a complex symbol on the piece of paper. It was made up of a Pupil-less Eye which represented secrecy, and the Contorted Lines which represented change.

After careful examination, she wrapped the finger with this piece of paper, stuffed it into her mouth, and bit on it noisily before swallowing it all.

With only four fingers left, flesh and blood suddenly squirmed around the wound on her right palm. It quickly grew into a new index finger, one that looked slightly pale.

She lowered her head, looked at her palm, and whispered a phrase, "The Fool?"

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